

# THE TIMES

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**The £250 a week superstar**  
Ewan McGregor  
page 5



**The technology of sex**  
by Jeanette Winterson  
page 5



**The best and worst of Harley Street**  
Dr Thomas Stiffart  
page 22



**30p**  
EVERY WEEKDAY

NEXT SEASON'S CRICKET FIXTURES IN FULL page 53 • 26 PAGES OF APPOINTMENTS

Exposing secrets 'was political'

## French free renegade MI5 officer

By BEN MACINTYRE, SUSAN BELL AND MICHAEL EVANS

DAVID SHAYLER, the renegade former MI5 officer wanted in Britain for allegedly leaking secrets to a newspaper, was freed from jail yesterday after a French court rejected Britain's bid to extradite him.

Judge Elisabeth Penroy said that Mr Shayler's motive for exposing MI5 secrets was political and that there were no grounds for extradition. Mr Shayler, who has spent four months in a French prison awaiting the decision, burst into tears at her words. But the Home Office made clear that the case against him remained open and the Crown Prosecution Service said that he would be arrested if he tried to return to Britain.

Leaving La Sante prison, Mr Shayler, 32, said: "This is a great day for justice but a sad and embarrassing day for MI5 and the British Government. I'm glad to be out, but I shouldn't have had to spend four months in prison for criticising MI5."

Hugging his brothers Jeremy and Phil and giving a special embrace to Annie Machon, his girlfriend and also a former MI5 officer, Mr Shayler added: "I suggest that they stop trying to persecute me and instead address the issues that I raise."

Government lawyers will examine the judgement before advising on the next course of action. A spokesman for the French Embassy in London said that Britain had no right

to appeal to France's Supreme Court, and if any further steps were to be taken they would have to be made by the French public prosecutor on behalf of the British Government.

He added: "The judgment today is final and Mr Shayler cannot be extradited, but an appeal could be made within five days by the French public prosecutor on a legal point — or the British Government could reapply for extradition on the basis of new evidence."

The court in Paris did not give a formal reason for its ruling, but Mr Shayler's lawyers had argued that his extradition was politically motivated and inadmissible under French law.

"We had the law on our side and the law was upheld," Anne-Sophie Lévy, Mr Shayler's French lawyer, said.

John Wadham, the director of the civil liberties group Liberty who is also representing Mr Shayler, urged the Government to abandon its attempts to prosecute him. "This demonstrates that the attempt to extradite David was politically motivated. Clearly the French court does not accept that he has done anything wrong," Mr Wadham said.

Mr Shayler faces prosecution in Britain under the Official Secrets Act for allegedly passing information about MI5 operations to the *Mail on Sunday*. Among the information published by the newspaper was allegedly damaging

material about an operation that may have compromised agents working for the Security Service. He also revealed that MI5 still had old files on Jack Straw and other ministers, dating back to when they were active leftwing students.

Mr Shayler's French lawyers had argued that under French law "spying, treason, and offences tending to undermine the security of the state are by nature considered political". A 1996 European convention limited EU countries to drop the concept of a "political crime", but the French Constitutional Council found that such a ruling would infringe a central principle of French law and that the treaty could not be ratified.

A spokesman for John Morris QC, the Attorney-General, said that he had made the decision that prosecution of Mr Shayler was in the public interest in Paris. Mr Morris sought the advice of a number of senior officials in Whitehall, including Stephen Lander, the Director-General of MI5.

Another former intelligence officer, Richard Tomlinson, who spent six months in jail in Britain for breaching the Official Secrets Act, later said that he, too, feared arrest if he returned to Britain from his present address in Geneva.

Mr Tomlinson, who served in MI6, has made a number of claims about his former em-



David Shayler, his possessions in cardboard boxes, leaving La Sante prison yesterday

ployers since leaving the country after his release from jail earlier this year. He has claimed that MI6 had produced a contingency plan outlining how President Milosevic of Yugoslavia could be removed from power. He also claimed that MI6 had a spy in

the Bundesbank. Last night he said the British authorities had recently asked the Swiss police to arrest him but they had ignored the request. "Like Shayler, I can never return to Britain without facing arrest."

Mr Tomlinson said that he was delighted for Mr Shayler

and hoped that the Paris court's decision meant he would be allowed back into France. Mr Tomlinson was arrested by French police after a request from Scotland Yard's Special Branch, but was released and then moved to Geneva.

## Labour will take revenge on peers over defeat

By PHILIP WEBSTER AND JAMES LANDALE

THE Government put efforts to abolish hereditary peers' voting rights at the top of its priorities last night after accusing them of frustrating the will of the people over the European elections Bill.

The Commons reversed for the fourth time a Lords defeat over the method of election in next June's poll. But both Tony Blair and Jack Straw made plain that they were ready to lose the Bill and fight next year's European elections on the existing first-past-the-post system rather than the proportional representation formula outlined in the Bill.

It appeared to be a final attempt to persuade the peers to back down, but it was a move that also delighted Labour's anti-PR factions who were quick to point out that the party would inevitably do better in the elections under the old system than the new.

It has been estimated that the PR system could cost Labour up to 30 seats and Mr Blair accused the Conservatives of having the "strategic vision of a bar" for opposing it.

As the final showdown between the two Houses approached, Downing Street revealed that Mr Blair now intended to use the clash as ammunition against the 750 hereditary peers who will be stopped next year from voting in the Lords.

The Government has come under mounting criticism for failing to come up with details on the second stage of its Lords reform. But Mr Blair's spokesman said that the clash had provided ministers with a classic "many not the few, people versus privilege" issue. Until yesterday ministers

had pledged to reintroduce the European elections Bill in the new session of Parliament next week and try to force it through by using the Parliament Act procedure which prevents the Lords blocking a measure for two sessions in a row.

But the Home Secretary suddenly announced that it no longer intended to use the Parliament Act. He claimed that the measure could be used only to force through the 2004 elections and would not be an option for next year without a recognition by the hereditary peers and Conservative leadership that they would not abuse their power.

The constitutional collision between the two Houses provoked one of the longest Question Time rows between William Hague and Mr Blair for months.

The Prime Minister attacked the "democratic monstrosity" of an inbuilt majority of Tory peers frustrating the will of the elected Commons.

But Mr Hague, roared on by his backbenchers, said that the only democratic affront was Mr Blair's plan to deny voters the right to vote for the candidate they preferred — a reference to the closed list system proposed in the Bill. Mr Blair, he charged, was overriding every constitutional check and balance to extend the power of his own "clique of cronies".

After their clash the Commons went on to debate the Bill again. After heated exchanges the Government secured a majority of 193 for the closed list system and sent the Bill back to the Lords for the last vote.

### BAe wins S Africa deal

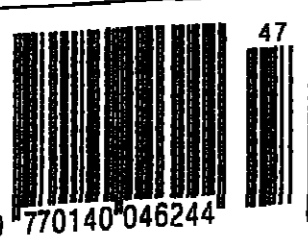
British Aerospace has won a major share of a £3 billion arms-buying programme by South Africa, it was announced yesterday.

However the achievement was clouded by fears that BAE is to close an armaments factory at Bishopclee, near Glasgow, with the possible loss of 300 jobs.

The company also admitted that it still waiting for hundreds of millions of pounds that are outstanding from Saudi Arabia. Page 29

TV & RADIO	54.55
WEATHER	28
CROSSWORDS	28.56
LETTERS	25
OBITUARIES	27
A. KALETSKY	24
ARTS	40.43
CHESS & BRIDGE	48
COURT & SOCIAL	26
LAW REPORT	47
BOOKS	44.45
TRAVEL	46

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## Robinson gives 54-second apology for 'oversight'

By ROLAND WATSON  
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

GEOFFREY ROBINSON made a 54-second apology to MPs yesterday for breaking parliamentary rules.

The Paymaster-General delivered the brief personal statement after the Standards and Privileges Committee forced him to the floor of the Commons to explain his failure to register a shareholding.

Mr Robinson, a multimillionaire who has previously been rebuked for failing to disclose his outside concerns in the register of MPs' interests, said that the latest omission was an "oversight".

Tony Blair declined to view the breach as a resignation matter, pointing out that the issue referred to a time before Mr Robinson was a minister.

However, David Heathcoat-Amory, Shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury, said: "What is clear from the statement is that Geoffrey Robinson lacked the humility that

was required. He must resign today." And Malcolm Bruce, the Liberal Democrat Treasury spokesman, said: "Mr Robinson's credibility at the Treasury has been seriously undermined and it is time for him to consider resignation."

Mr Robinson's apology was triggered by a report from Sir Gordon Downey, the Parlia-



"When Geoffrey Robinson said sorry the matter was closed"

mentary Commissioner for Standards, into three Tory complaints. He dismissed two, but upheld one that Mr Robinson twice failed to register a shareholding in Stenbell, which provides services to his other companies.

During the period in which he failed to register that interest, Stenbell acquired a rights issue of 9,805,550 shares in TransTec. Mr Robinson's light engineering firm, and sold it to an offshore trust of which the minister is a discretionary beneficiary.

Mr Robinson told the Commons: "The oversight concerning registration, for which I apologise, is entirely my own responsibility." He also surprised MPs by announcing that he had amended his entry in the register to include Roll Center Incorporated, which he owned between 1988 and 1992. The link had been the subject of a Tory complaint to Sir Gordon in the past few days.

Leading article, page 25

## Navy fires first armed Tomahawk

By MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE EDITOR

A ROYAL NAVY nuclear submarine last night fired an armed Tomahawk land-attack cruise missile for the first time, aiming it at a simulated communications facility made out of blocks of steel containers on an uninhabited island off the coast of California.

The test flight of the Tomahawk, 65 of which have been bought by the Navy for £190 million, was watched by Admiral Sir Michael Boyce, the first Sea Lord and Chief of Naval Staff, standing in a vessel three miles from the targeted island of San Clemente, which it hit one hour and 28 minutes after its launch. The island, owned by the US Defence Department, is 75 miles west of San Diego and Los Angeles.

The "hunter killer" submarine, HMS *Splendid*, launched the conventionally armed Tomahawk at 6pm GMT while lying submerged about 500 miles west of San Clemente. The missile, which

has a range of about 700 miles, was fired from one of the torpedo tubes and after a 12-second booster-rocket burst to reach sufficient speed, it flew to the target at 500mph powered by a turbofan jet engine and guided by a global positioning system.

Although it was the first live firing of the Royal Navy's new weapon system, HMS *Splendid* launched two other un-armed Tomahawks earlier this month for technical checks. Those were fired at China Lake in California and recovered using a parachute and "a lorry filled with mattresses", which a Navy source said proved the missile's accuracy. Last night's live firing was intended to prove that the missile had both accuracy and destructive power.

The Tomahawks bought for the Royal Navy are the latest upgraded Block III version — the same weapon that was 15 minutes away from being

Continued on page 2, col 8

## Sabotage holds up the Millennium line

By MICHAEL HORNSNELL

THE success of the Millennium Dome was threatened by industrial anarchy last night as electricians working on the £2.85 billion rail link with central London faced the possibility of the sack.

The sabotage of electrical cables in complex fire safety equipment on the Jubilee Line, where no work has been carried out this week by electricians following a walk-out, has brought relations with London Underground to boiling point.

Underground sources said they are

being held to ransom by the men, who are earning up to £1,150 a week on the line which has to be completed by next autumn in time for the nationwide celebrations. The 10-mile extension is set to carry over half the 12 million people expected to visit the Dome in Greenwich in the year 2000.

Several acts of sabotage in recent months culminated in the cutting of cables after the completion of work on two escalator sprinkler systems.

Dismissing some of the electricians and recruiting others was under discussion as an option by management last night, as officials claimed that the sabo-

teurs "clearly knew exactly what they were doing".

The vandalism - said to be an attempt to keep the highly paid work going as long as possible - will cost about £100,000 to repair and could delay the project by up to a month if tests on the repaired system prove further sabotage has been carried out.

British Transport police will question suspected electricians employed by the contractors, Drake & Scull. The already tight security has been stepped up with extra guards and roving patrols.

The project, which is already 18


months behind schedule, was hit on Monday by an unofficial walk-out over the transfer of 12 electricians from the site at London Bridge Station to Green Park Station. It was the latest in a series of wildcat strikes. A picket line at the London Bridge site was set up yesterday.

The opening of the Stratford to North Greenwich section of the Jubilee Line is due in late spring, and the North Greenwich to Waterloo section in late summer.

The pay row, page 10  
Leading article, page 25

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# Now new Labour means never having to be embarrassed

It is instructive to watch a politician when he's in the wrong and knows it. Qualities never tested in victory are called for. This was when Margaret Thatcher was at her most magnificent — and preposterous.

Hague's bowling. Mr Blair was thrown on to the defensive. But he was not stumped down, but not out. There is no doubt who won the exchange: Mr Hague did: he had a marvellous afternoon. But behind the headline — "Hague lays into Blair" — there is a quieter observation to be made: call it mettle or brass neck, but Blair sticks to his guns even when he's out-gunned.

Government Bill, and cruelly mocked by the Tory Leader. Blair stayed on his feet: This took nerve. Blair had it. Hague went straight in. How many Government backbenchers had spoken in favour of the "closed list" for the European elections? Blair had to dodge the question, the answer being "one". Through-out what followed, Blair ducked and weaved but never regained the initiative.

Hague was funny. Blair was grim. Hague told him to get advice on answering ques-tions from "one of those Chinese mystics" he consulted (rich, from someone unashamedly into transcendental meditation). Blair told Hague he needed help from his new image consultant (rich, from one who makes image-management a political creed).

Blair was forced to rely on two defences: railing at heredi-tary peers, and insisting that closed list systems are very common in Europe. By the end the Tories were cheering Hague more than Labour was cheering Blair. Hague left to go to another cheer: Blair to none. I was struck by the picture of a Prime Minister reduced to shouting at an Opposition Leader "No, he is wrong. He is wrong!" — and silence behind him.

But I was also struck by his stammer: a kind of shamelessness, but impressive for all that. It was Paddy Ashdown and his Liberal Democrats who squirmed. The "Personal Statement" later was another example of new Labour's implied "OK I'm wrong — so what are you going to do about it?" Journalists had been abuzz with excitement at the promised mea culpa from the Paymaster General, Geoffrey Robinson.

In the event the confession took 54 seconds. To suggest that for Mr Robinson the occasion seemed less than traumatic is to understate. He read out the financial interests he had forgotten to declare. He might as well have been reading out a luncheon menu. At the end, Robinson apologised rather as one might say sorry when one's sum-mer triller, loaded with champagne and truffles, bumps another in Waitrose. And he sat down. That was it. No, he was not going to re-sign. No, he was not available for questions on the subject. The affair was closed. It was not a problem. Being a Labour minister is never having to say you're embarrassed. New Labour, no sweat.

Only a brave speech later by Bill Michie (Lab, Sheffield, Heeley) a leftwinger rebelling against the closed list, suggested there are Government MPs who still know how to blush. But then Mr Michie has nothing to lose — has he? Surely they couldn't take away his seat ... could they?



tions from "one of those Chinese mystics" he consulted (rich, from someone unashamedly into transcendental meditation). Blair told Hague he needed help from his new image consultant (rich, from one who makes image-management a political creed).

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# Court backs jail damages for fine defaulters

HUNDREDS of fine defaulters won the go-ahead in the High Court yesterday to begin compensation claims against magistrates who unlawfully jailed them.

Frances Gibb on a ruling that affects hundreds of people who were wrongly imprisoned

ment had to have been tried without success before a jail term was justified. The court successes scored by HMB Law had achieved the "salutary result" of greatly reducing the numbers of fine defaulters sent to prison by magistrates, he added.

The court outlined errors made by magistrates' courts all over the country in thousands of cases when dealing with fine defaulters. Many were jailed: the higher courts subsequently held they should not have been.

free unlawfully jailed defaulters and had fought numerous cases through the courts, he added. In some cases magistrates had sent defaulters aged under 21 to prison — when the law specifically stated they should be sent only to young offenders' institutions — and prison authorities had "turned a Nelsonian blind eye" when accepting them into custody.

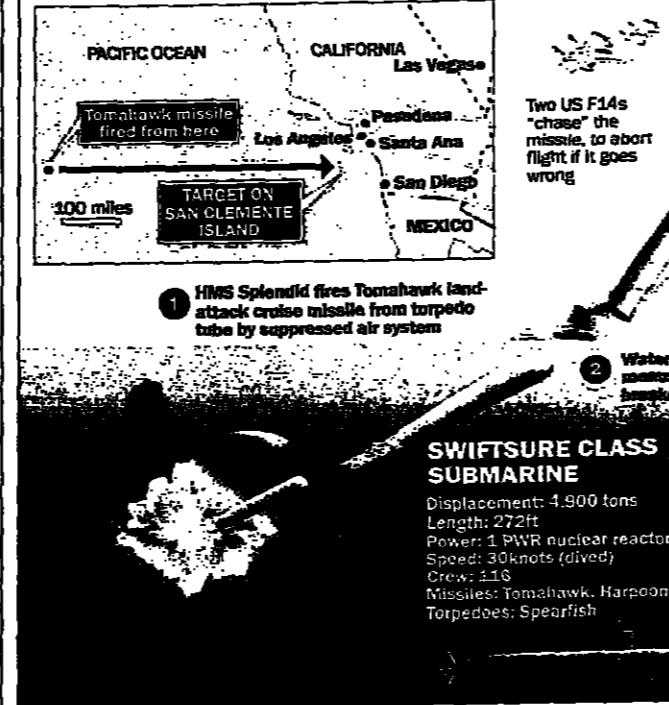
The decision means that each case will have to come before the High Court for a hearing and even if their jail terms are quashed, defaulters will still be open to further enforcement action over unpaid fines. Richard Wise said that those fine defaulters who had challenged their jail sentences in the courts could now make damages claims. He said there were tens of thousands of people who had been jailed unlawfully but could not seek compensation because they had not sought a judicial review of the magistrates' decision.

Lord Justice Brooke said it had been estimated that an average of 22,500 fine defaulters were jailed each year by magistrates between 1992 and 1995. That has fallen to 8,500 a year in the wake of criticisms of JPs by the higher courts.

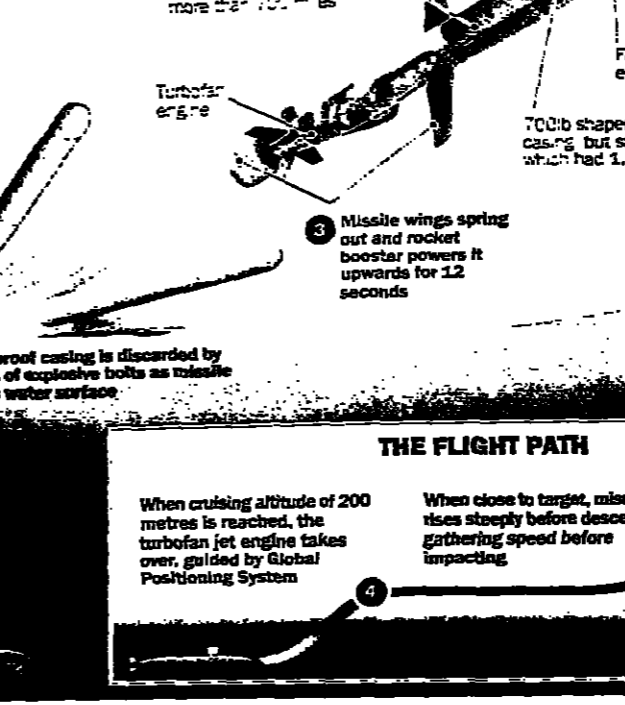
The judge added: "People were being locked up when they should not have been and some enterprising prison establishments have been examining justices' warrants very carefully on receiving fine defaulters into their already crowded establishments."

A fine defaulter who is jailed for a week might be able to claim up to £400.

## HMS SLENDID FIRES FIRST UK TOMAHAWK



## TOMAHAWK BLOCK III



# Fighting fund for grammar schools

A NATIONAL campaign to preserve the remaining grammar schools will be launched in the new year, just as opponents of selection attempt to collect sufficient signatures to force the first parental ballots on their abolition.

The National Grammar Schools Association is planning a fighting fund, with a website to circulate information on local campaigns. Several groups of schools have already begun to seek support for selective education from parents and local communities. In Kent, which has the largest number of grammar schools, parents are being asked for a £12 subscription to a county-wide campaign. Eric Hammond, a former leader of the Electicians' Union, is acting as the spokesman for Support Kent Schools, which claims that compre-

hensive reorganisation would "mean chaos for the next generation of secondary children". Kent is expected to be one of the main targets of the Campaign for State Education, which opposes selective schooling. But regulations adopted by MPs this week will require thousands of parents to sign a petition before a ballot is held on the future of the grammar schools.

In Buckinghamshire, which has the only fully selective system, opponents will have to collect 40,000 signatures before a ballot can take place. Margaret Dewar, the deputy leader of the education authority and former chairman of the grammar schools' association, said: "It will be a tall order in Buckinghamshire but a number of isolated grammar schools may be vul-

# Navy tests its first armed Tomahawk

Continued from page 1 fired in anger on Baghdad four days ago by the US Navy. The Americans also have a 1,000-mile range Tomahawk, which is fired from surface warships.



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# Policeman sues for cost of Viagra

A FORMER Irish policeman invalidated out of the force after a beating began a court claim yesterday for compensation so that he could pay the anti-impotence drug Viagra. Philip Purcell, 45, from Dublin, was ordered to retire by the Irish Police Commissioner, Pat Byrne, last year after being attacked and injured during an Irish football match in Dublin's Croke Park stadium in 1994.

# Pinochet hopes for freedom on his birthday

GENERAL Augusto Pinochet will learn on Wednesday whether he has been spared from the threat of extradition to Spain on charges of genocide, torture and terrorism. Five law lords will give their ruling in the House of Lords on the appeal, brought on behalf of the Spanish authorities by the Crown Prosecution Service, against the High Court decision on October 28 that the general has sovereign immunity from arrest. If they uphold the High Court's ruling, he will almost certainly be free to fly home to Chile. If they overturn the lower court's decision, a potentially lengthy extradition process will follow.

# Charges over Net paedophile ring

SEVEN men were charged last night in connection with an alleged international paedophile ring operating on the Internet. The men, arrested in Britain during a global police operation, were charged with conspiracy to distribute indecent images of children and are due to appear before magistrates in Hastings, East Sussex, in January. Two months ago officers led by the National Crime Squad simultaneously raided alleged suspects' homes in 12 countries, including Australia, France, Germany, Italy, Finland, Austria, Belgium and the United States. The operation — codenamed Cather-

# Contemporary Ceramics

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# The men who had to give up their seats

### Sexism row as council women force out two newcomers, reports Helen Johnstone

IT WAS one of the greatest challenges that the women's sub-committee had faced in ten years. Their two new members were men.

With the law on their side, Paul Ingram, of the Green Party, and Steve Goddard, a Liberal Democrat, hoped to become the first men on the committee at Labour-run Oxford City Council after they were nominated by their parties. But a frosty reception at their first meeting when members voted "not to welcome them" brought them to a halt.

A woman has since resigned in protest at the committee's sexism. Both men had been sent out for 20 minutes while members discussed them at the meeting on Monday night. Those in favour of letting them stay included the chairman, Mary Clarkson, a working mother, and another Labour member. But Mrs Clarkson said that the majority were

against. She said: "The women's committee is an opportunity for women to exchange information. Some of the co-opted members felt they would be more comfortable discussing very sensitive issues if men were not present."

The sub-committee, set up in the mid-1980s to represent women's interests in Oxford, has campaigned on a range of issues, including support for victims of domestic violence. It is made up of four women

councillors and more than a dozen non-elected co-opted members. The latter include representatives of women students, single mothers, pensioners and ethnic minorities. Sources suggested that the co-opted members who swung the vote include several arch feminists. The rejected Mr Goddard, 29, who teaches French literature at the university, said yesterday: "I don't know whether the group is full of feminists or not. I was not in there long enough."

Critics of the decision, including some within the committee, said that if men did the same thing there would be uproar. Jackie Gray, a Liberal Democrat councillor and a mother of two, has resigned, saying the concept of excluding elected representatives purely because of their sex was completely absurd. "These two men represent hundreds of women in their wards," she said. "This is not practising equal opportunities."

The committee rejected a compromise by both men to leave when sensitive issues were discussed. Mr Ingram, who as a former vice-president of Oxford University Students Union was instrumental in appointing a women's officer and securing a night bus scheme for women students, said: "I think the committee will suffer as a result of this narrow agenda. I told them I thought it was a committee to discuss women's issues and not a committee for women."



No welcome: Steve Goddard and Paul Ingram



James Aukett leaving the hearing, at which he denied sexually harassing an assistant

# Dentist 'used spanking to help exam revision'

BY TIM JONES

A DENTIST put an assistant across his knees and slapped her bottom as he made her shout answers in an exam revision test, a disciplinary hearing was told yesterday.

James Aukett, 49, was alleged to have carried out the assault at his clinic in Brighton in 1991, when the assistant was 19. The disciplinary committee of the General Dental Council was told that Mr Aukett had insisted that the young woman go to his office although she had German measles.

Jane Sullivan, for the council, said: "Mr Aukett took hold of her, pulled down her rights and knickers, put her across his knees and slapped her bottom, making her shout out answers to questions."

She said the dentist had told the woman, who was identified only as Miss A, that she would have to take off an item of clothing for every set of three questions she got wrong in a written questionnaire.

At first, Miss Sullivan said, the assistant had laughed it off as a joke but Mr Aukett, formerly director of dental services for South Downs NHS Trust, had grabbed her as he sat at his tutor's desk.

Miss A, who is now pregnant with her second child, said that after the spanking she had felt "totally humiliated and embarrassed". She said that Mr Aukett watched her dress, gave her a peck on

the cheek and told her there were no hard feelings.

After escaping from the room, Miss Sullivan said, the woman told another dentist, a dental nurse and her mother what had happened and only her mother had told her to complain.

Miss A joined Mr Aukett's practice when she was 16. She said: "He was very friendly at first but there was always sexual innuendo. After the incident I drove away in tears. He was a person in authority. I thought everybody was going to believe him and not me."

Later, she said, Mr Aukett told her he was sorry and that he would lose his job for what he had done.

Questioned by Nicola Davies, QC, for Mr Aukett, Miss A said she could not recall taking the pop singer Madonna's "raunchy" book about sex to show to other dental trainees.

The committee was told that other members of staff were victims of Mr Aukett's sexual innuendo. This included suggestions, it was alleged, that nurses' uniforms should be changed to see-through blouses and stockings.

Mr Aukett is also accused of deliberately making a false declaration on an application form by his wife, Frances, 48, for an examination in 1998. She is now a senior education officer with the NHS trust. The hearing continues.

# Council must find home for Swede

BY FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

A HOMELESS Swedish single mother won a High Court battle yesterday against a council's refusal to house her and her children.

In a test ruling, the court held that the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham had acted unlawfully when it gave Amma Damoah, 39, an ultimatum to go home at public expense or receive no further help if she refused. Mr Justice Kay declared that Ms Damoah, who had fled domestic violence in Sweden, was entitled to rely on the provisions of the Children Act 1989 to safeguard her family while she looked for work in Britain.

Legal experts said that the ruling would benefit other people seeking jobs in the European Union. There were warn-

ings that it could lead to a rise in "benefits tourism". People from the Continent with dependent children would be able to use the Children Act to get around statutory regulations barring them from claiming income support and housing help, according to some legal experts.

The judge said that the council's decision had amounted to unlawfully "washing its hands of the children". It had been entitled to offer to return the family to the country from where they came if it believed that would best meet the needs of the child. But, he added: "It is wrong for the local authority to decide to withdraw all further assistance for the child in the event that the parent declines to accept the offer."

# Silcott fails to overturn murder conviction

BY RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

WINSTON SILCOTT yesterday lost his attempt to have a second murder conviction re-examined by the Court of Appeal.

Silcott, cleared on appeal of the murder of Police Constable Keith Blakelock, had hoped to win his freedom from jail, where he is serving a life sentence. He was convicted in 1986 at the Old Bailey of the murder of Anthony Smith, a boxer, who died after a fight at a party in East London.

Last night the Criminal Cases Review Commission, which investigates alleged miscarriages of justice, said it had decided against sending the case back to the appeal court.

Silcott has always said that he was acting in self-defence



Silcott is serving life for killing boxer

when he stabbed Smith at the party in Hackney. He was convicted of the murder while awaiting trial for the murder of PC Blakelock, hacked to death during the riots at Broadwater Farm estate in Tottenham.

North London. He was convicted of the murder of PC Blakelock but the conviction was quashed on appeal in 1991 amid fears that vital evidence could have been fabricated.

Silcott has received about £17,000 compensation for that miscarriage of justice.

His solicitor submitted new statements from witnesses backing Silcott's claim that Smith was armed with a knife and appeared to threaten Silcott at the party.

The evidence added that Smith was the leader of a criminal gang bringing terror to North London. He had allegedly picked a fight with one of Silcott's friends days before his death. When Silcott intervened, Smith had allegedly threatened to kill him, leading Silcott to arm himself on the night of the party.

# If it feels good, it's good for you

BY NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

ENJOYING pleasurable sensations, and even simply thinking about them, gives the immune system a boost, scientists have found.

Volunteers who sniffed the aroma of melted chocolate showed a temporary increase in their ability to fend off common infections such as colds. But those who sniffed rotting meat showed a decline. The positive effect of the chocolate was much greater in men.

In another experiment, the act of writing down an account of something that had given pleasure produced a similar boost, while writing about feelings of guilt produced the reverse.

The results, announced yesterday, are the first from a programme of research commis-

sioned by Arise, a coalition of scientists backed by the food, drink and tobacco industries. They believe that the positive role of pleasure has been neglected in medical research. Professor David Warburton, of the University of Reading, asked 40 volunteers to spend five minutes writing about an experience that had caused happiness or guilt.

He said: "Whatever your pleasure is, try to maximise it. At the end of the day, you should review how good the day has been, picking out the high spots. This will strengthen your immune system and protect against infections."

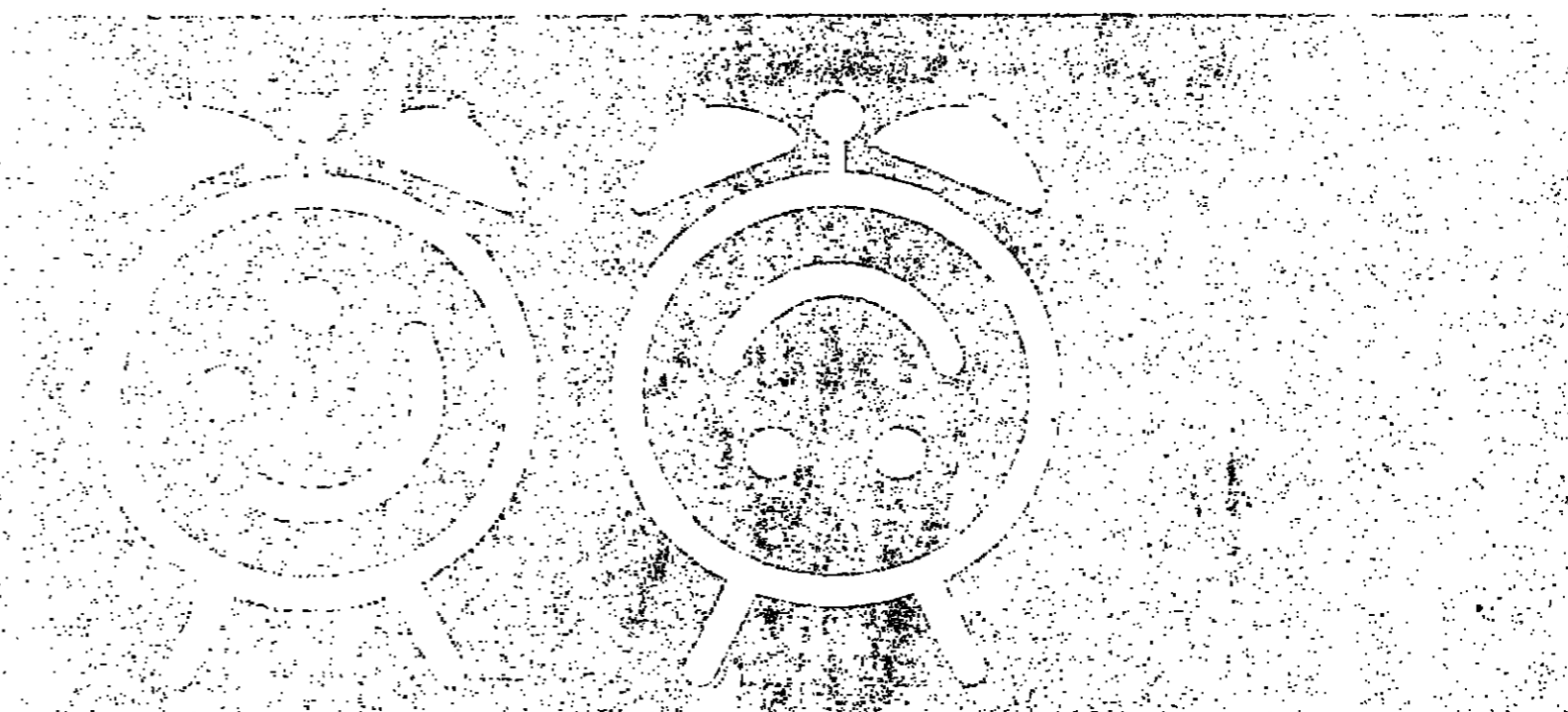
Indulging in the same pleasure all the time will not work, however, because the response to it will become blunted.

# Hague's aunt bluffs way on TV

WILLIAM HAGUE's aunt dipped yesterday to pay for a guest spot on the television programme *Call My Bluff*.

Marjorie Longdin, 73, paid £12,000 for the privilege of appearing on the television show as part of an auction organised by Radio 2 for BBC Children in Need. She scooped an £86,648 National Lottery prize after matching six numbers in the midweek National Lottery draw a week ago and shared the £3.4 million jackpot with three other punters.

Mrs Longdin, put in her winning bid during Terry Wogan's *Breakfast Show* yesterday. The presenter has been offering once-in-a-lifetime packages to listeners who ring in with the highest bids.



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**IN THE SATURDAY TIMES**



**SOPHIE DAHL**  
Cuddly in cashmere



**JONATHAN MEADES**  
Why British food revival is a con

# Big rise in Britons imprisoned abroad

ABOUT 2,350 Britons are being held in foreign prisons, an increase of more than 400 in a year. Half have been charged or convicted over drugs.

The rise is revealed in the latest Foreign Office consular report on dealing with the problems of the record numbers of Britons travelling overseas. More than 1,800 died abroad last year, including 43 murder victims.

The largest number of British prisoners is in Spain, with 348, followed by France (324), the United States (281) and Germany (122). Together these four countries account for almost half of the total. In each case, the numbers in jail have increased.

Officials working in British consulates were notified of the arrests of a total of 8,822 Britons last year, and made 8,797 prison visits. Thirty-four Britons were transferred back to the United Kingdom to complete their sentences under international prisoner exchange agreements and those negotiated bilaterally with Brazil, Egypt and Thailand.

The report underlines the increasing workload of consular officials at a time when the Foreign Office budget is facing sharp cuts. In 1996, there were

**Most are held in Spain and France, and half the offences have involved drugs, reports Michael Binyon**

more than 42 million visits abroad by Britons; last year this rose to a record 46.8 million, an increase of nearly 40 per cent in five years. France and Spain remain the most popular holiday destinations. An estimated 14 million Britons live abroad, the largest

numbers being in Hong Kong (3.6 million, including overseas passport holders), Australia (3.4 million), Canada (3 million), South Africa (1.8 million), USA (0.9 million) and Spain (0.4 million). British posts abroad last year issued or amended 399,000 passports, a 13 per cent increase on 1996 and more passports issued abroad than any other country. Consular officials were notified of 1,827 Britons who died abroad. The largest number by far was in Spain (405), and after natural causes road accidents accounted for the bulk of deaths. There were also 43 murders, 43 suspected suicides, 41 drownings and 30 who died in other accidents at sea.

Figures for cases of violence against Britons reported to consular officials included 161 assaults, 121 robberies, 66 rapes, 17 abductions and eight terrorist actions. British consular officials dealt with 12 kidnappings and hostage-taking cases, most of which were resolved. Consular officials also arranged warnings to or the evacuation of Britons in Indonesia, Lesotho and Eritrea.

The report underlines the often thankless task of consular work, which involved 9,248 cases last year, and received 86 complaints. The total cost to the taxpayer was £43.7million. Five new honorary consuls were appointed in Montpellier, Varna, Vladivostok, St Kins and Szczecin, bringing the total to 240 honorary consulates in 90 countries.

**AROUND THE WORLD WITHOUT A CLUE**

For the first time, the report gives details of cases resolved by consular officials. One tells of a 90-year-old Briton who arrived in Tokyo on a round-the-world backpacking trip with no money or travel insurance. He had brought only his Post Office account cash card. "The vice-consul discovered that the cash card could be used to draw money through one of the handful of international bank machines in Tokyo and escorted him through the crowded rush-hour streets," the report said. "He told the vice-consul he was surprised the Post Office did not have a branch in Tokyo!"

Another case related to the discovery by archaeologists during construction work in Turkmenistan of a body whose clothing indicated a British cavalryman from the early part of the century. British soldiers were there in 1919 fighting against Bolsheviks. The body was reburied in a Christian cemetery in a service attended by the Ambassador.



Diane Cramwill take her place on the Bench with her guide dog, Prudence

## Woman wins her fight to be first blind JP

By SIMON DE BRUXELLES

A WOMAN who helped to overturn a 52-year-old ruling to become Britain's first blind magistrate takes her place on the Bench today.

The appointment of Diane Cram, 43, from Exeter, is the culmination of a four-year campaign to prove that blind people are as capable of administering justice as the sighted. Until now, Lord Chancellors have stood behind a 1946 ruling that excluded blind magistrates on the ground that they were unable to observe a defendant's demeanour.

Mrs Cram, who is chairman of her local branch of Guide Dogs for the Blind, wrote to the Lord Chancellor, Lord Irvine of Lairg, asking him to reconsider the regulations earlier this year after her application to the Bench was turned down. His staff replied that a review was underway.

They invited her to become one of six visually handicapped candidates training as JPs as part of an 18-month experiment. The five others, who are partially sighted, are to sit for the first time in the next few weeks.

Mrs Cram, who lost her sight after a routine dental operation 15 years ago, said: "I was absolutely delighted. Lord Irvine has shown he is not afraid to challenge the legal establishment."

"I cannot see what a defendant's expression has got to do with anything. We are supposed to judge on the evidence, not on the way someone looks."

As a newcomer, she will sit as a "winger" to the chairman of the Bench at Exeter and Woford Magistrates' Court, hearing cases such as burglary, common assault, criminal damage and driving offences.

Mrs Cram, a mother of three who recently separated from her husband, has defied her disability by pursuing hobbies such as line dancing and horse-riding. But her proudest moment will be when she enters court with her nine-year-old German shepherd guide dog, Prudence.

She has already practised her entrance with the sighted magistrates and said: "We want to keep things dignified. We need to bow together and I will get a tap on the hand from one of my colleagues when the time comes."

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CHANGING TIMES

**Trendy Trainsp**

School website links pupils to drug advice

**FOUND**

هكذا من الأصل



# Trendy platform for Trainspotting star

Joanna Bale reports on fortunes tale of two actors both being paid the Equity theatre minimum

EWAN MCGREGOR may regard his £250-a-week wages at the Hampstead Theatre as beer money, but to his co-star, Sean Gilder, it is cash to keep the wolf from the door.

Last night, at the opening performance of David Halliwell's 1965 comedy *Little Malcolm and his Struggle against the Eunuchs*, the two actors, who are on the same pay, wowed a packed audience at the 174-seat theatre in North London.

But while McGregor takes a huge salary cut and puts his Hollywood career on hold to return to his thespian roots, Gilder is thankful that he no longer has to work as a barman and hospital porter to pay his bills.

Gilder, 34, who lives in a modest rented flat near McGregor's £1.25 million townhouse in North London, said yesterday: "I am just a jobbing

actor who, until quite recently, has had some really hard times. I had two nine-month periods where I had nothing offered to me and was forced to work as a barman and a hospital porter."

With a lead role in the ITV series *Hornblower*, Gilder's career is now flourishing, but he never takes the work for granted. "You never know when it all might dry up, so £250 — which is £200 after tax — is not to be sniffed at. Thankfully television work is more lucrative, so it means I can afford to do theatre without having to supplement my income with jobs like barwork."

McGregor is following in the footsteps of stars such as Nicole Kidman, Kevin Spacey and Juliette Binoche, who have been happy to receive the Equity minimum wage for a chance to play the London stage. Despite McGregor's



Nicole Kidman: from Hollywood to London

Hollywood heart-throb status, Gilder warmed to the *Trainspotting* star's professional attitude in rehearsals.

"He's a lovely down-to-earth bloke with a great enthusiasm for the play," Gilder said. "He is totally unaffected by all the Hollywood hype. He turns up to the theatre on his motorbike for rehearsals and we just have a hoo."

He and McGregor became good friends after travelling with two other cast members to Huddersfield, where the

play is set, just to see the town. He added: "The director thought it would be a good idea, and it was. We stayed the night there and ever since then we have stuck together as a group. I hope it comes across in the play."

The production which runs to January 2, is, predictably, a sell-out, with tickets rumoured to be changing hands on the black market for hundreds of pounds. However, the distinct possibility of a move to the West End may bring it to a wider audience.

McGregor plays Malcolm Scrawdyke, a 1960s art school student who plots revenge for being suspended. The production is very much a family affair. McGregor's uncle, Denis Lawson, directs and Lou Gish, daughter of Lawson's partner Sheila Gish, also stars.

McGregor recently said: "If people come along to Hampstead thinking, 'That's the guy from *Trainspotting*', we're going to show them a great play. Maybe then some day they'll go: 'Oh, I quite liked that, I'll maybe go to the theatre again.' That's what's fantastic."



Ewan McGregor, left, and Sean Gilder preparing yesterday for the first night at the Hampstead Theatre

EWAN MCGREGOR, aged 28

Job description: heart-throb filmstar  
Credits: *Shallow Grave*, *Trainspotting*, *A Life Less Ordinary* and soon-to-be-released Hollywood prequel to *Star Wars*  
Estimated wealth: films have so far earned him £4 million  
Family: married to Eve, French set designer, daughter Ciara, 2  
Home: £1.25 million house in Belzize Park, north London  
Education: left school at 16. Studied acting at Guildhall School of Speech and Drama, London  
Big break: Dennis Potter's 1993 television series *Lipstick On My Collar* in his final year at drama college  
Resting jobs: don't be ridiculous  
Most treasured possession: Ducati 748 motorcycle  
Favourite hobbies: motorbiking and football

SEAN GILDER, aged 34

Job description: jobbing actor  
Credits: productions with English Shakespeare Company, bit parts in *The Bill*, *Casualty*, lead part in ITV's *Hornblower*  
Estimated wealth: £30,000 a year  
Family: lives with stage-manager girlfriend, no children. No relatives in the business  
Home: rented flat in Muswell Hill, north London  
Education: degree in modern history from London University  
Studied acting at Webber Douglas, London  
Big Break: *Our Boys* at the Donmar in 1993  
Resting jobs: barman, hospital porter  
Most treasured possession: his new word-processor  
Favourite hobbies: Golf and script-writing

## School website links pupils to drug advice

By Victoria Fletcher

A DRUGS education website launched yesterday by the Government links directly to another site which tells young people how to enjoy their first LSD "trip".

The official website, set up by the Institute for the Study of Drug Dependence and partly funded by the Department for Education and Employment, does not endorse other drugs information sites but does offer pupils and teachers direct links to what they consider to be the "most informative" other drugs sites.

One of these hyperlinks takes visitors to Cascade, where pupils can send questions about drugs to the new Mandy and Claire Problem Page. Recommendations by "Mandy and Claire" include how to get the most enjoyment out of your first LSD trip and the "relaxed happiness and uncontrollable laughter" that results after smoking marijuana.

The computer-based advice follows new guidelines for schools calling for leniency in the treatment of pupils caught with drugs, which caused an outcry from some teachers' leaders earlier this week.

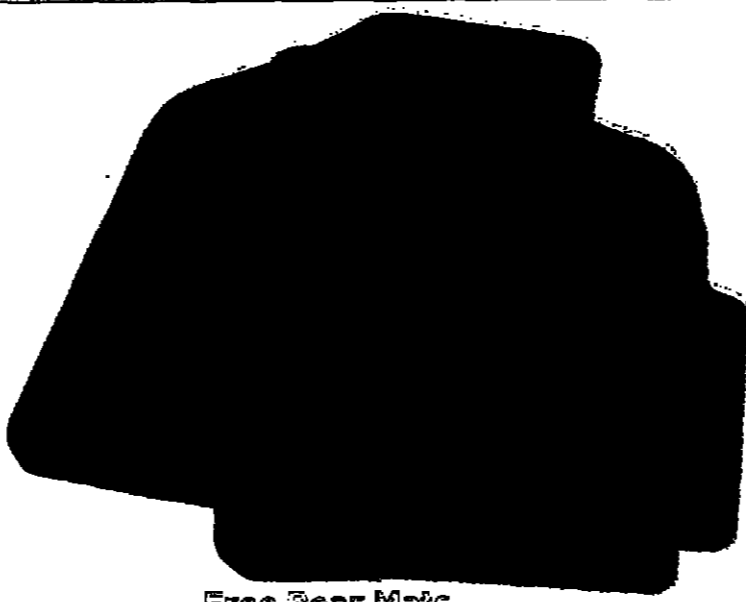
Charles Clarke, Minister for Schools, launched the official site which offers the latest research into drugs, names of regional drug action teams and recommended drug prevention policy.

At the Forest Gate Community School in Newham, East London, Mr Clarke said: "Drugs are a threat to ever younger children. We believe pupils and young people must be made aware of the risks of drug abuse before they are likely to be drawn into experimentation."

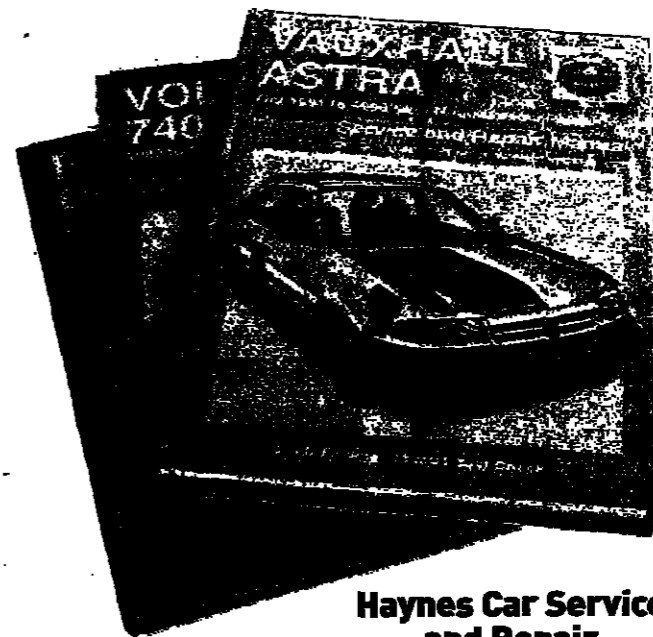
He added: "This is an excellent way of using technology to equip teachers with vital information about the latest materials and current policies on drug education. It will provide invaluable support to teachers in their crucial role of educating pupils about the dangers of drugs."

Doug McAvoy, general secretary of the National Union of Teachers, said that details of the effects of drugs should not be put in too light a context. "Although the NUT agrees with the growing use of computers in school, it must be very careful of what it is linked to."

# Top Gear this Christmas.



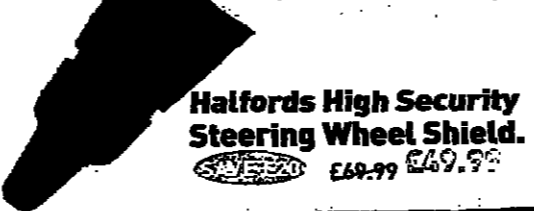
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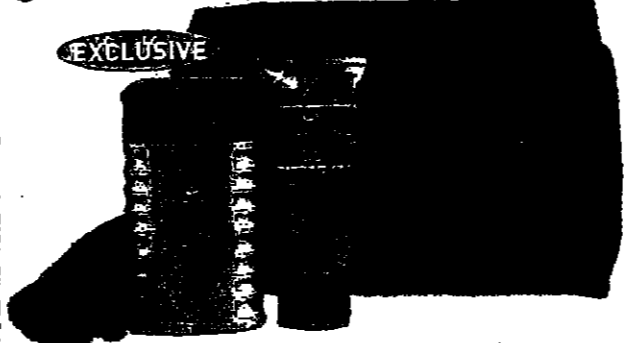
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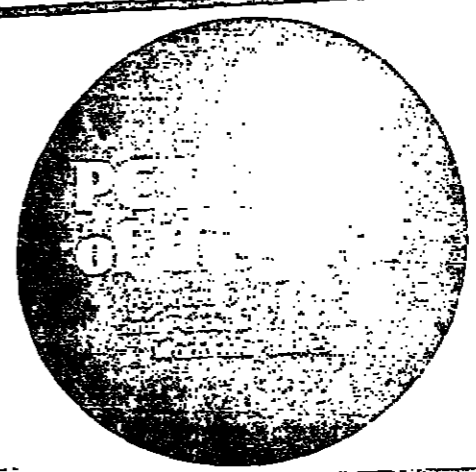
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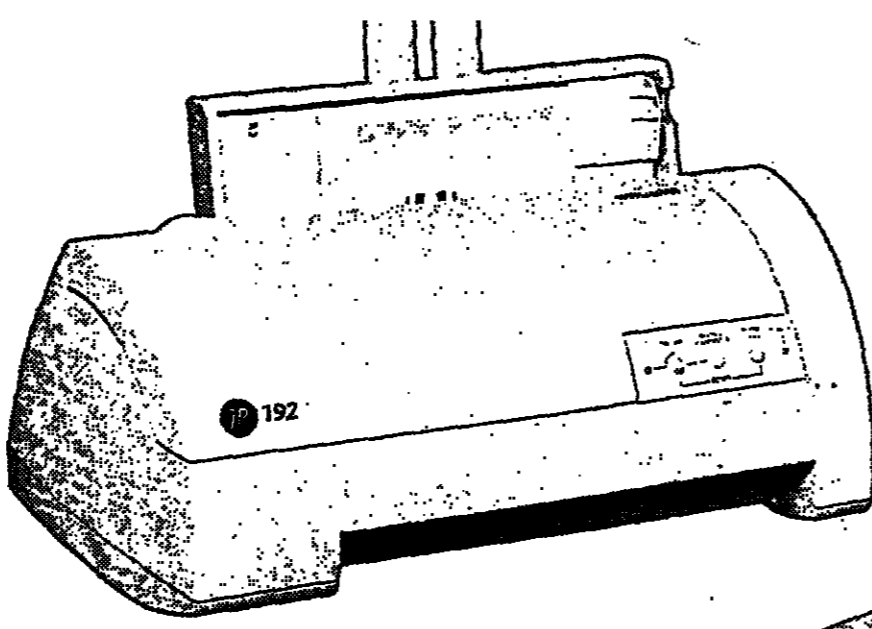
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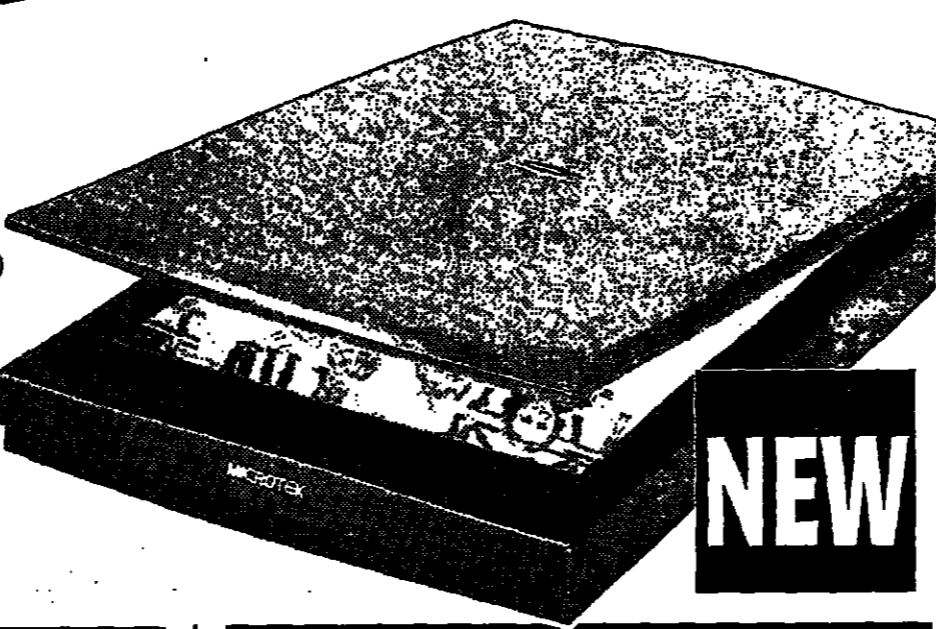
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# Patten denies decision to disband RUC

BY MARTIN FLETCHER, CHIEF IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

CHRIS PATTEN yesterday denounced as a "piece of fiction" a highly inflammatory report that suggested his policing commission was considering the effective disbandment of the Royal Ulster Constabulary.

The former Conservative minister and Governor of Hong Kong said *The Irish Times* had published the report despite being told it was a fabrication. "We have not started forming conclusions," he said. His commission had just launched a Province-wide consultation exercise and "we are not going round holding 30-odd meetings in the next few weeks as a sort of pre-Christmas pantomime".

Mo Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary, was equally adamant that no drafts existed. She called the front-page article "very unhelpful", but

Jim Cusack, *Irish Times* security correspondent, said he and his newspaper stood by it.

The report said the commission's preliminary drafts recommend that RUC officers be invited to apply to join a newly constituted force — the Northern Ireland Police Service — which would have more Roman Catholic officers and be more accountable to local authorities. The Union Jack and the Queen's portrait would be removed from police stations.

The vehemence of Mr Patten's and the Government's denials demonstrated the extreme sensitivity of the policing issue. Sinn Féin is demanding that the RUC be disbanded, but Unionists are equally determined that the force should not be sacrificed.

Mr Patten held a hastily arranged meeting with David Trimble, Northern Ireland's

First Minister, yesterday. Mr Trimble left after 30 minutes saying he had been assured no drafts existed, but added: "We remain concerned because speculation does not appear out of nowhere."

Ken Maginnis, the Ulster Unionist Party's security spokesman, said the commission would have to be disbanded if the report was true. "It would be completely unacceptable that conclusions had been reached at a time when the commission is just embarking on a further phase of an extended consultation process."

Any proposal to disband the RUC would represent "another capitulation to terrorism". The commission was established as part of the Good Friday peace accord. It has received written submissions from interested parties, and is due to report next summer.



Royal mail: the Queen meeting motorcycle couriers outside the Merrill Lynch offices in the City yesterday

## City bankers welcome the Queen

THE Queen paced a busy trading floor and met City brokers yesterday as part of a new drive to bring her closer to British working life (Susie Steiner writes).

The day of engagements, themed on London's money markets, took in six financial institutions and was the start of a more targeted approach to the royal schedule by Buckingham Palace. The Lord Mayor of London, who would normally

greet the Queen in morning coat and tails at the Mansion House, instead wore a business suit and met her at the American investment bank where he works.

"The Palace told me, 'This is not a ceremonial visit. It's about people with their sleeves rolled up,'" said Lord Levene of Portsoken, who took over as the new Lord Mayor last week. The Queen and

the Duke began their tour at Canary Wharf, and then greeted the Lord Mayor at the Bankers Trust. The Duke, meanwhile, visited Lloyds TSB bank and regulators of the Stock Exchange.

On her way out of the building she stopped to chat with motorcycle couriers. "She wanted to know how long I'd been doing the job and if I liked it," said Stephen McMarlow, one of the riders.

## Diana car may have been stuck in neutral

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

THE car in which Diana, Princess of Wales was killed was probably freewheeling in neutral at high speed when it crashed into a pillar in a Paris underpass, a new report says.

Forensic tests indicate that Henri Paul, who died in the crash, made a critical error as he struggled to control the powerful Mercedes. Tests by an expert, Michel Nibodeau, submitted to the crash investigator, Hervé Stéphan, show that M Paul apparently tried to slow the car by putting it into a lower gear just before the crash. He may instead have slipped the car's automatic gearbox into neutral, thus losing control.

Witnesses reported hearing a roaring from the engine. "As far as the racing of the engine is concerned, we believe this was due to a mistaken movement of the gear stick towards the neutral position through ignorance of the gear system," M Nibodeau reported. "We note that the chauffeur was not qualified to drive the car."

## Prince takes issue with homeless

BY ADAM FRESCO

THE Prince of Wales jokingly swore at a group of homeless people yesterday as he unveiled a plaque commemorating new buildings for *The Big Issue* magazine.

He told the them that he had a sore throat and hoped everyone could hear him when a vendor of the magazine shouted: "Chaz, do you want a Tune then?"

There were several more light-hearted cries for him to unveil the plaque, to which he laughingly replied: "Why don't you lot come and open this bloody thing." During his speech, the Prince said: "It is a great pleasure to meet the highly intelligent and vociferous people that seem to inhabit this place."

As he left the new £2 million headquarters in Central London, where he dipped into his pocket and bought the latest issue of the magazine, John Castleman, 38, who has



The Prince takes a look at *The Big Issue* yesterday

been selling *The Big Issue* on the streets for three months, repeatedly asked him to sign a copy. Despite the protestations of royal bodyguards, Mr Castleman continued after the Prince saying: "Come on, Chaz, sign this one." Finally the Prince gave in and as he turned to sign his name sighed: "Oh, you Hackney characters." During his tour of the offices, the Prince asked

after his former schoolfriend Clive Harold, whom he met last December when he toured their old offices in Clerkenwell.

Mr Harold, an alcoholic, was at the time selling *The Big Issue* outside Holborn station and told the Prince that they were at Hill House prep school together in Chelsea in the late Fifties. But he was not at the visit yesterday as the

former journalist had "a number of social problems to sort out", according to staff.

The Prince was also read poetry by vendors of the magazine, including one from a Colombian woman whose brother is named after the Prince and sister after the Queen.

Among those he met was "D" Fisher, 28, who told him how she and nearly a hundred friends had formed a limited company to purchase a street of Victorian terraced houses in London Fields, Hackney, from the council so that they could live in them.

As he officially opened the building, which was bought with the proceeds from the sale of the previous headquarters, and was refurbished with the help of several companies, the Prince said: "It's been marvellous to see what good corporate citizenship can do. I just want to express my heartfelt congratulations and appreciation for all the hard work that has gone on."

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# NHS may face £1bn bill for 48-hour week

Junior doctors and lorry drivers will feel effects of EU curb, write Charles Bremner and Mark Henderson

HIGHER prices in the shops and extra costs of more than £1 billion for the NHS were forecast yesterday as the European Commission announced plans to widen restrictions on working hours.

The British Medical Association said that an extra 6,000 junior doctors, costing more than £1.1 billion to train, would be needed to maintain levels of patient care if the proposal to phase in a 48-hour week for house officers and registrars were approved by EU ministers next month. The new staff would add more than £100 million to the NHS salary bill.

The Commission's move to extend the Working Time Directive, adopted by Britain last month, could also lead to price rises for consumers as nearly six million transport workers are brought within its scope. The Road Haulage Association warned of price rises of up to a third for goods such as newspapers, whose delivery time is sensitive. The Newspaper Publishers Association declined to comment.

Britain cannot veto the proposals, which are likely to be adopted by qualified majority. At present, several groups who work a flexible timetable are excluded from the directive. Junior doctors and trans-

port workers will no longer be excluded, although doctors will be allowed to work up to 54 hours for a further seven years under a compromise demanded by Britain. Time spent resting but on call will not be counted. Both groups will be allowed to work overtime in individual weeks, but must average below the legal maximum over a four-month period, and hours must never exceed 60 in any one week.

Health-service groups said that the proposals would have serious consequences for the NHS, which still requires one in six junior doctors to work more than the 56 hours a week set by their recent New Deal. Stephen Thornton, chief executive of the NHS Confederation, said that swift implementation would hit care standards: "We won't have enough doctors to go round and patient care will be affected."

Junior doctors welcomed the principles behind the move, but also warned of difficulties.



Kimnock said safety was more important than cost

Kimnock said safety was more important than cost

Andrew Hobart, chairman of the BMA junior doctors committee, said: "It has to be introduced sensibly and with some necessary flexibilities."

Lorry drivers were also concerned. Dan Hodges, of the Road Haulage Association, said: "Good employers will remain good employers and bad employers will flout the new regulations. Those on the margins will be forced to the wall." He said the extension of the directive had been forced by militant trade unions on the Continent.

Neil Kinnock, the Transport Commissioner, said that safety concerns could not be ignored for reasons of cost: "I don't think there's a tolerance level for junior doctors or truck drivers which means that, at the margin, there is a willingness to accept the risk of tragedy that comes with fatigue." Faigue was estimated to cause 20 per cent of the 8,100 deaths per year in accidents involving coaches and lorries on the EU's roads, he said.

Padraig Flynn, the Social Affairs Commissioner, said there was enough support among EU states to ensure that the rules would become law by the end of next year.

The NHS is already trying to recruit 1,000 extra trainee doctors a year in a seven-year plan. Britain and Ireland are alone in their tradition of requiring trainee doctors to work extremely long hours, and had won an exemption when the original working-time law was passed.



Susan Marshall outside the High Court: she was offered the job as Simon Stone

## Sex-change prosecutor settles her legal battle

By Frances Gibb  
LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

A CROWN prosecutor who claimed that she lost her job when she decided to have a sex change settled her legal battle with Dame Barbara Mills, the former Director of Public Prosecutions, yesterday.

Susan Marshall, 52, a barrister at Oxford University and former Naval commander, had said that she was offered the job when she was still Simon Stone.

The offer was withdrawn, however, after she wrote to Dame Barbara, who retired from the post of DPP at the end of last month, explaining that she was undergoing sex-change treatment.

The Crown Prosecution Service had planned to fight an Employment Appeals Tribunal ruling in the Court of Appeal yesterday that work equality extends to transsexuals and she could pursue her claim for sex discrimination.

But before the hearing began before Lords Justices Roch, Chadwick and May, the two sides reached agreement "amicably on confidential terms".

Lawyers involved in the case said the CPS and Dame Barbara had withdrawn their application for leave to appeal and Ms Marshall had in turn withdrawn her claim for sex discrimination, which had been supported by the Equal Opportunities Commission.

Ms Marshall had her operation in 1994.

### UPPER LIMIT WILL EXCLUDE MANY

Several occupations will still be excluded from the full terms of the Working Time Directive, even if yesterday's proposal is adopted. Most qualify to work extra time because their jobs involve copious travel or irregular hours, or because they decide the length of their own working days. The groups are the self-employed, managers and executives, journalists, vicars and family workers, air crews and offshore platform workers. Essential civil and military defence personnel — policemen, firemen and the Armed Forces — are also exempt. Individuals in other jobs can work longer than the maximum, but only if their employer has obtained their agreement in writing.

## Britain challenged on barristers' immunity

Frances Gibb reports on human rights claim over 'negligence'

THE Government is being challenged to justify the immunity that prevents people from suing barristers for negligence.

The case, before the European Commission of Human Rights, is being brought by a former bank accountant who was convicted of prejudicing a drug-trafficking investigation. Mohammed Yusuf Patel was convicted in December 1987 and sentenced to four years' imprisonment. He served almost 2½ years. His appeal against conviction failed but he now has a further appeal pending before the Court of Appeal.

He claims his conviction was a miscarriage of justice that was as much the fault of the trial barrister as the failings of the criminal justice system. But attempts to sue his former barrister, claiming damages for losses caused by the alleged negligence, have failed. As a result of a House

of Lords ruling in 1969 in a case called *Rondel v Worsley*, which confirmed barristers' immunity from negligence suits, most of his claim was struck out.

The Court of Appeal upheld that decision and Mr Patel went to the House of Lords, which also rejected his petition to review advocates' immunity over in-court work.

Daniel Machover, solicitor for Mr Patel, said: "He believes the immunity is an unjust procedural bar, supported by some highly dubious and outdated 'public policy' rea-

sons." The Government now has to set out its reasons in a written response to the European Commission of Human Rights, he added.

It is asking whether the immunity can be justified in the light of the right to a fair trial under article six of the European Convention of Human Rights. Mr Machover added that there were a number of similar cases pending before the Court of Appeal, all challenging barristers' immunity from suit.

"If the Government lose this case it will have to change the law to make it possible for barristers and solicitor advocates to be sued in negligence for work done in court."

Although a new European Court of Human Rights has now set up in place of the old Commission and Court, cases already lodged before the beginning of this month will be dealt with under the old system.

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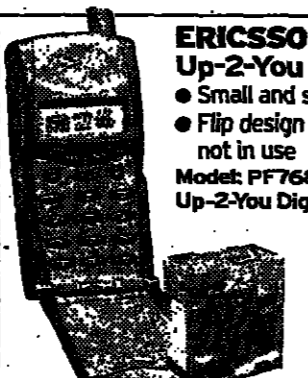
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Y NOVEMBER 19 1998

# Sex-change prosecutor settles her legal battle

By Frances Gibb  
LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

A CROWN prosecutor who claimed that she lost her job when she decided to have a sex change settled her legal battle with Dame Barbara Williams, the former Director of Public Prosecutions, yesterday.

Suzie Marshall, 52, a lecturer at Oxford University and former naval commander, had said that she was offered the job when she was still a man.

The offer was withdrawn however after she was told by Dame Barbara, who was then in the post of DPP, in the first of last month, explaining that she was undergoing a sex change operation.

The Crown Prosecution Service had planned to file an Employment Appeal Tribunal ruling in the Court of Appeal yesterday that would extend to transsexuals the equal pay provisions which would permit them to claim for sex discrimination.

But before the hearing began, Lord Justice Bingham, Lord Justice Balcombe and Lord Justice Phillips reached agreement, apparently on condition that the Crown Prosecution Service would not proceed with the case.


The DPP's decision was criticised by the CPS and the Labour Party, who argued that it was a breach of the Sex Discrimination Act 1975. The DPP's decision was also criticised by the transsexual community.

# Challenged on immunity

Gibb

The Crown Prosecution Service's decision to file an Employment Appeal Tribunal ruling in the Court of Appeal yesterday that would extend to transsexuals the equal pay provisions which would permit them to claim for sex discrimination. But before the hearing began, Lord Justice Bingham, Lord Justice Balcombe and Lord Justice Phillips reached agreement, apparently on condition that the Crown Prosecution Service would not proceed with the case.

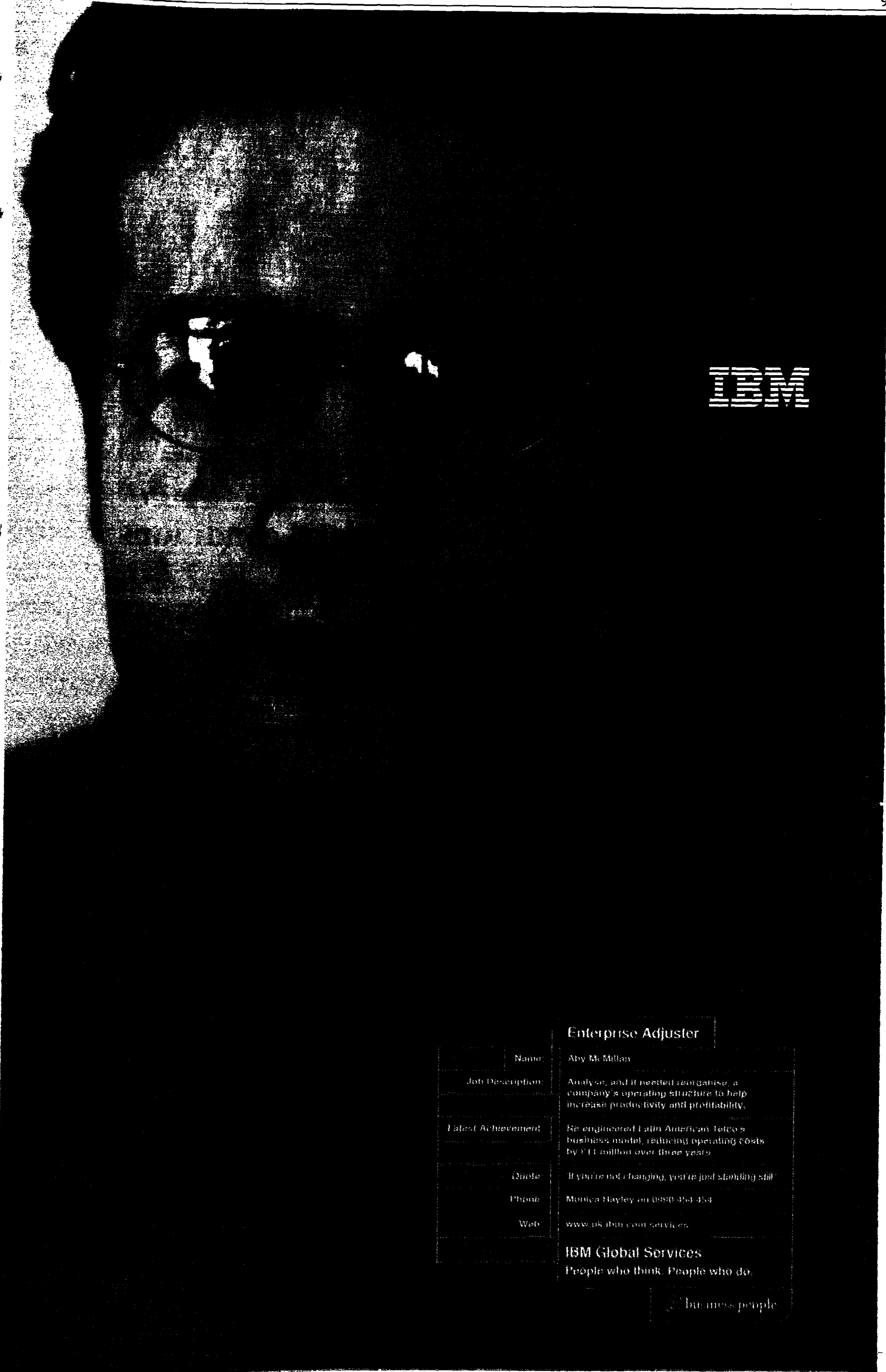
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# No cut-off for failing to pay water bill

Firms say ban means extra cost for everyone, reports Nick Nuttall

DISCONNECTIONS are to be outlawed under plans to reform the water industry. Water companies reacted angrily to the news and claimed that compensating for bad debts would force up the bills of other customers.

Michael Meacher, the Environment Minister, said that the Government was "not persuaded" by their worries, as the companies had a battery of options to crack down on determined nonpayers without the need to disconnect. These include taking people to court, using bailiffs to recover money or goods, the use of attachment of earnings orders and other civil debt procedures.

The new rules will cover households, schools and hospitals. Water firms carried out 1,900 disconnections last year. Mr Meacher said that the right threatened the health of some households in genuine financial difficulty. It was better that the courts, rather than water companies, decided which homes were in financial distress and which ones were trying to fiddle the system.

"We believe that water is essential for life and health, and that no one should be deprived of it simply because of an inability to pay," he said. "Our proposals will mean an end to domestic disconnections and ensure that no school or hospital is ever disconnected for non-payment of water bills."

The Government was also keen to see meters offered free to all homes to reduce water demand to protect rivers, wetlands and other sensitive areas during times of drought. About 13 per cent of households pay for water by meter, with the heaviest concentrations in drier parts of the country such as East Anglia.

All homes built since 1990, when the old rates system was scrapped, have had meters installed. The rest pay for water in the traditional unmeasured way based on the old rateable value of a home. The Government believes that metering, which is commonplace on the Continent, makes homeowners more careful in using water.

Mr Meacher said some water companies offered meters free to users but others did not. This was slowing their uptake, especially among poorer households, who could not afford the cost of £75 to £150.

Officials at the Department of the Environment said that free meters could be in a third of homes in five years. The cost would be spread among all water consumers, adding an average of £1 to all water customers' bills over a year. But the officials said this was unlikely to be noticed given the pressure for water bills in England and Wales to be cut by 10 per cent between 2000 and 2005 after rising by over a third on average since privatisation in 1989.

Mr Meacher said it was not just single people or ones in big houses with high rateable values that would benefit from metering. "A half of all households on income support will gain from the use of a metered supply," he said.

Metering, which the government supports as mandatory for big domestic water users such as those with swimming pools, also pave the way for flexible tariffs.

The British Medical Association welcomed the plan to outlaw disconnections. But Pamela Taylor, chief executive of Water UK, which represents the industry, said the proposals would "leave us with a patchy system of using rates and meters with no real sense of where we're going."



Paul Gover, station delivery manager for the Jubilee Line, with some of the vandalised cables at the London Bridge station on the Jubilee Line

## Best rates and the worst conditions

Michael Horsnell on the militant Jubilee Line workers who 'do like their tea breaks'

THEY earn the best rates in the construction industry, often topping £1,000 a week. But the 500 electricians working on the Jubilee Line extension give the impression of regarding conditions as little better than those on the Burma Railway. Below ground, rats are their companions; management is the real enemy.

The electricians working on the vital transport link to the Millennium Dome are earning a reputation as the most militant workers since the industrial anarchy of the Seventies.

They have staged unofficial walk-outs over the moving of 12 of their number from one site to another and over alleged safety deficiencies in their working environment — a claim hotly denied by London Underground. Certainly conditions are tough but their

pay — a top rate of £1,150 for a 65-hour week if deadlines are beaten — is the envy of other electricians.

According to management, most earn "the best part of £1,000 a week" which is rather better than the standard industry rate of £750 an hour.

One insider said they worked long hours but "they do like their tea breaks". Another said workers' concerns over safety were overstated: "One of their wildcat strikes was over the fire alarm — it's cobblers."

Subject to random breathalyser tests before they are allowed "down the hole", the electricians frequently find

themselves working on their knees in cramped conditions.

Air quality, noise and lighting are other tribulations. With building supplies being moved between sites by diesel train, the air can be less than wholesome and high-powered fans have to be used to comply with health and safety regulations.

Ear muffs are a common sight below ground because of the reverberating noise from power drills and the fans themselves. To overcome the poor overhead lighting, the men usually drag spotlights behind them. After a 7.30am start, the first break of the day

is taken at 10am when, according to one electrician, workmen dare not leave their post a moment too late or they spend the entire 15 minutes queuing for tea.

Rigorous work inspections by Drake & Scull, the contractors, who monitor the progress of each man, and London Transport representatives are another part of the drudgery. No one denies the work is well rewarded but, equally, few feel they have over-reacted to the working conditions.

Some are concerned enough about their militant image that they have signed a petition to John Reid, the Transport Minister, and Andrew Smith, the Employment Minister, seeking assurances that they will not be blacklisted from future work once the project is completed.

NEWS IN BRIEF

### 5m cars 'at risk from lead ban'

More than five million cars in Britain could be at risk from engine damage after the European ban on leaded petrol takes effect on January 1, 2000. Peter Barlow, of the Retail Motor Industry Federation, told a seminar that tests in Sweden indicated that unleaded petrol was not as effective in stopping engine wear and that additives did not perform as well. When the ban comes into force many small-engined cars designed for leaded petrol could be only eight years old and cars with larger engines six years old.

### Killer wasps

Wasp stings caused a fatal heart attack in a farmworker, an inquest was told. Fred Parker, 63, of Devizes, and his boss disturbed a wasps' nest as they chased a cow. His heart was already damaged by disease. Verdict: natural causes.

### Shadow cleared

The former gladiator Michael Costello — Shadow in the TV series — was cleared of handling a stolen Porsche when the case against him collapsed at Southwark Crown Court in London. Costello, 42, said he was asked to drive the car.

A taxi driver was jailed for 18 months for killing a passenger in a crash on the M4. Andrew Beddis, 26, died minutes after David Griffiths, 26, from Newport, South Wales, was told by police to slow down. Cardiff Crown Court was told.

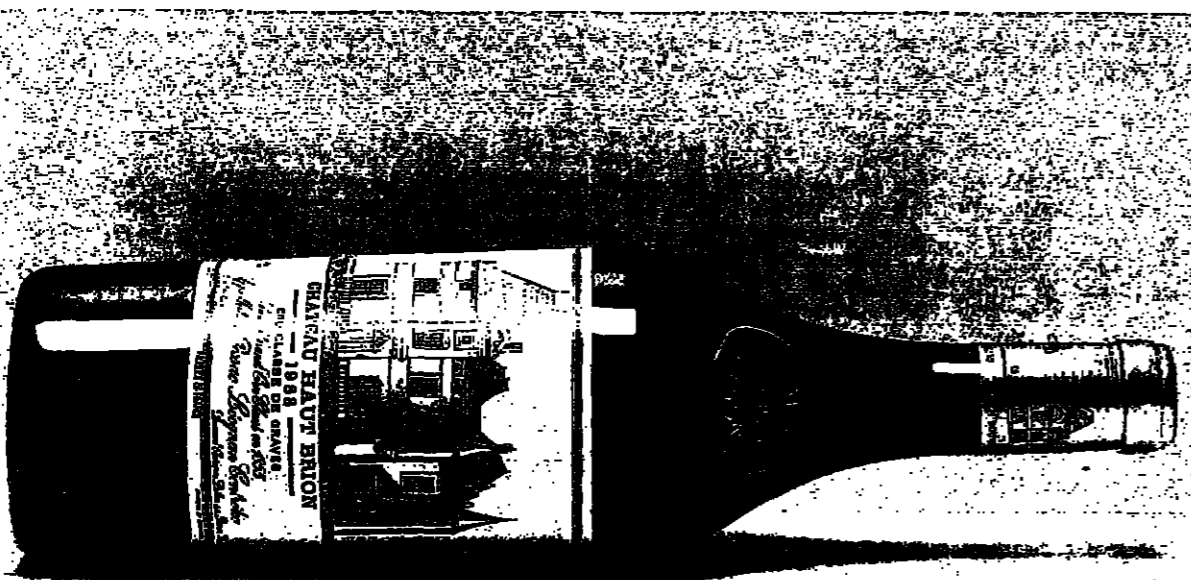
### Speed failure

Colin Fallows, 48, reached 250.9mph in the jet-powered car Vampire at Elvington airfield near York in an attempt on the 258mph British land speed record. The Prime Time team has now abandoned further attempts until spring.

### £529,000 violin

A rare Stradivarius violin has fetched £529,500 at Christie's in London. The Joachim Kortschak, named after two previous owners, was bought anonymously. Only 650 instruments by Antonio Stradivari (1644-1737) have survived.

## BMW Four Plus. More proof that growing older has its compensations.



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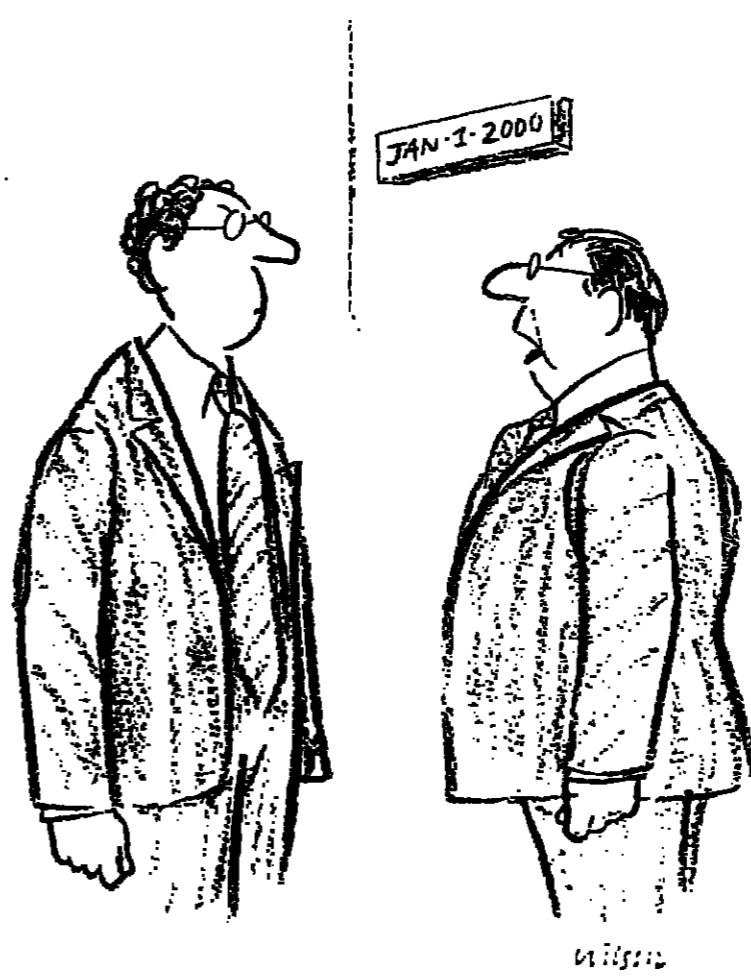
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Race to soldier

British a nation proud to be puzzled

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NEWS ABOUT ISRAEL

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# Race to honour old soldier on deathbed

### Police escort sped Légion d'honneur to 101-year-old veteran minutes before he died, writes Peter Foster

A BRITISH Legion official given the task of bestowing the Légion d'Honneur on a Great War soldier found himself in a race against time after learning that the 101-year-old veteran was close to death.

The French Government awarded the honour to all veterans of the First World War to mark the 80th anniversary of the Armistice. Among the recipients was to be Herbert Tompkins, who served with the Royal Artillery at the Battle of Ypres in 1915.

But Mr Tompkins was in a rapidly worsening condition in the coronary unit at the Royal Leicester Infirmary. When Peter Lockett, a British Legion county field officer, learnt that he was near death he jumped into his car and set off for the hospital.

Caught in traffic on the way, Mr Lockett realised that he needed assistance if he were to

arrive in time. "When I got to Scraptoft I spotted a police car and flagged it down. I explained to the officer what I was doing and he offered to take me through. The journey would normally have taken over an hour, but the police escort cut it to 45 minutes."

At the hospital Mr Lockett, by now trailing a retinue of police officers, nurses and doctors, ran to the ward where Mr Tompkins lay semi-conscious.

Mr Tompkins' son, Howard, watched by his father's bedside as Mr Lockett conducted a brief presentation ceremony and awarded the medal. "My father died five minutes later," Mr Tompkins said.

"It was very moving and a fitting end to his life. The doctors and nurses say that hearing is the last of the senses to leave you before death, so I hope that he heard every-



Mr Tompkins' award, marking the Armistice

thing." The veteran's eldest son, Alec, said that his father was a private man who rarely, if ever, talked about his war-time experiences.

"For his 100th birthday we had buglers from the Royal Artillery Association and some people from the railways where my father worked as a ganger after the war. We had to coax him down from his room, but he got into the spirit of things."

The late Mr Tompkins enlisted in the Royal Marines in

1914 but was invalided out after contracting diphtheria. He then joined the horse artillery and worked on a Howitzer battery. He was wounded by shrapnel in the right foot and invalided home after the Battle of Ypres. Afterwards he learnt that his battery colleagues had been wiped out by a German shell.

During the Second World War Mr Tompkins served in the Home Guard and repaired bomb damage to the railways. His wife of 28 years, Agnes, died in 1953, leaving him to bring up his youngest son, Howard. He spent his later years watching cricket at Leicestershire's county ground, near his home, and learnt to play the piano while in his 80s.

When the family put together a brief account of his life they discovered that, during a spell of rest and recreation behind the lines on the Western Front, Mr Tompkins had a chance meeting with his brother, who was moving up to the front line. "They chatted, caught up with a few things, but that was the last time they met," Alec Tompkins said.



Herbert Tompkins celebrating his 100th birthday with Royal Artillery colleagues

## Anti-terror policeman killed himself

BY A CORRESPONDENT

A SENIOR anti-terrorist officer who killed himself in the armoury of Scotland Yard had previously attempted suicide, an inquest was told yesterday.

Detective Inspector John Watt, 40, shot himself in the head with a pistol in August after lapsing into the severe depression he had suffered four years earlier but had kept secret from his employers.

Paul Knapman, the Westminster Coroner, criticised Scotland Yard for failing to find out why the high-ranking officer of over 20 years' experience had taken six months' sick leave in March 1994. Recording a verdict of suicide, Dr Knapman said he would be writing to the Metropolitan Police Commissioner to urge him to "strictly review" changes on sickness procedures.

Mr Watt, who had been happily married to his wife, Susan, for nine years, spent 1994 at the South East Regional Crime Squad, which involved long hours of surveillance. During that time he attempted to kill himself in a hotel.

### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### 5m cars 'at risk from lead ban'

More than five million cars in Britain could be at risk from engine damage after the European ban on leaded petrol takes effect on January 1. Peter Barlow, of the British Motor Industry Federation, told a seminar that the ban would mean that the lead additives did not perform as well. When the leaded petrol was used in cars designed to run on unleaded petrol, the engine could be damaged. The ban will affect cars up to six years old.

#### Killer wasps

Wasp stings caused a fatal heart attack in a farmer, it was told. The victim, a 62-year-old man, was stung in the chest by a wasp. His heart stopped beating and he died. The coroner said the wasp was a killer wasp.

#### Shadow cleared

A shadow of a shadow was cleared in the case of a man who was accused of a crime. The man was found to be innocent. The shadow was cleared.

ns

#### Speed failure

A speed failure occurred in a car. The car was moving at a high speed when the engine failed. The driver was able to stop the car safely.

## Titanic whisky sold for £1,093

BY SHIRLEY ENGLISH

A RARE bottle of 1912 Titanic Scotch Whisky, produced to mark the maiden voyage of the ill-fated liner, was sold for £1,093 in Glasgow yesterday.

The hand-blown green bottle of Scotch, distilled by Duncan Manning & Black of London to commemorate the launch, was bought at auction by a private Scottish collector for twice its expected price.

The London vendor, whose identity was not disclosed, was given the bottle by a relative, who in turn received it from a merchant seaman who had obtained it on a ship docked in Trieste, Italy, in 1948.

It is thought that the bottle was one of a batch given to merchant seamen in the year of the launch and then kept out of respect for the 1,502 victims. The label bears the legend, "Old Scotch Whisky Titanic Distilled and bottled by Duncan Manning & Black."

Martin Green, Christie's whisky specialist, said: "There is a bit of a mystery surrounding this bottle. No one knows the exact history of it and we can only suggest that it was produced to commemorate the launch. This is the only one I have ever seen."

About 1,500 bottles of malt were expected to realise more than £165,000 to collectors from around the world.

A 50-year-old Macallan, known as the Rolls-Royce among malts and with a strength of 38.6 per cent volume, sold for £5,750 to an American collector. It was one of 500 bottles taken from three barrels of spirit distilled between 1926 and 1928. Christie's said its strength had been diluted by nothing but time.

## Britain is a nation proud to be puzzled

BY TIM JONES

BRITAIN has become a nation addicted to solving puzzles with nearly three quarters of the population regularly confronting challenges from the intricacies of *The Times* crossword to simple coffee-break teasers.

Puzzle-solving, a MORI poll shows, is more important to many people than making love and is an obsession that spans the generation gap. One woman in three, it appears, spends more time on puzzle solving than love-making while one man in four admitted the same.

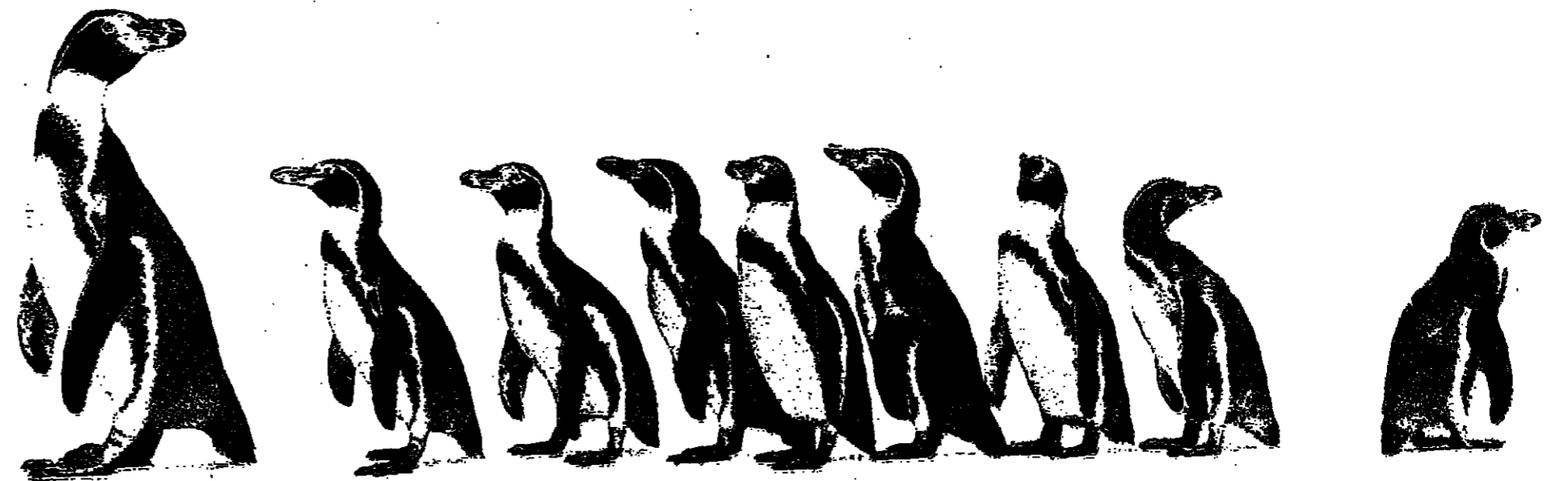
The poll shows that half of those who do puzzles attempt them every day, with a fifth devoting more than an hour to the pastime.

Puzzle-solving is more popular in Scotland and the North of England, where people spend more time on them than southerners. Even young people, the survey showed, are hooked, with three quarters of 15 to 24 year olds tackling them, a quarter of them every day. While the sitting room is the most popular place for puzzle solving for six out of ten people, only one in twelve takes puzzles to bed or the kitchen.

People who admit to doing puzzles in the lavatory spend up to an hour there. Not surprisingly, only one in a hundred tries to do them in the bath, and one in ten admits tackling them at work, with men more likely than women to waste their boss's time.

The poll was conducted to mark the launch of *Carol Vorderman's Puzzle Challenge*, a magazine that offers a range of puzzles for all abilities.

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COMING SOON DVD



# Who would be last past the post?

### James Landale looks at who might suffer most if plans for PR at the European election were abandoned

THE Tories and the Liberal Democrats would almost certainly be the biggest losers if the first-past-the-post system were reintroduced for next summer's European elections.

Both parties would secure fewer MEPs than they had expected to win under proportional representation. But the reselection process would also reopen internal Tory wounds over Europe. And the Liberal Democrats would have lost one of their most cherished electoral reforms.

By contrast, Labour would be likely to secure more seats in Strasbourg than they had expected to under PR. The many anti-PR ministers and backbenchers would also have secured a victory in their battle against PR for the Commons.

But perhaps the biggest losers would be the 228 candidates which the three main parties have already selected and placed on ordered regional lists. Because of the way that proportional representa-

tion works, many of them would have had a fair idea of whether they had a chance of being elected. Without PR, their political futures are entirely up in the air.

None of the main parties have established ways of reselecting their candidates for the present 84 Euro-constituencies. Nothing can guarantee them securing seats under the old system.

Ironically, a return to the old system might actually give a fresh chance to those would-be MEPs who failed to secure winnable positions on the PR party lists. For example, two pro-European rebel Tory MEPs — John Stevens and Brendan Donnelly — might now try to remain in Strasbourg.

In terms of seats, the Tories would suffer most. The party has 18 MEPs and under proportional representation had expected to win at least 28 if the electorate voted as they did in last year's general election.



Some of the possible losers: the Liberal Democrats Baroness Nicholson and Liz Lynne, and the Tories Timothy Kirkhope and Jonathan Evans

Under the present system, they would be less likely to make such a gain and might even lose seats.

The whole process of reselecting their candidates would almost certainly result in a fresh bout of battles between pro-European and Eurosceptic Tories. Many Eurosceptics failed to secure winnable positions on the Euro-lists and would try again under the old system. Without knowing the

new selection procedure it is difficult to predict who might be under threat but it could include Lord Bethell and the former MPs Timothy Kirkhope and Jonathan Evans.

The Liberal Democrats would also not get as many seats as they had hoped for under PR. They had expected to raise their number of MEPs from just two to about 12. This is much less likely with first-past-the-post. Those Liberal

Democrat candidates most under threat are the former MPs Liz Lynne, Baroness Nicholson, Hugh Dykes and Chris Davies.

More generally, the loss of PR for the European elections would be a fearful blow to the Liberal Democrats' co-operation with Labour and for Paddy Ashdown in particular. Many Liberal Democrats are already concerned that the Government will not back the

Jenkins Commission recommendations of PR for the Commons. Failure to get PR even for Europe would be a disaster and could put the Liberal Democrat leader under fresh pressure to abandon his co-operation with Tony Blair.

In terms of seats, Labour would do the best. Its present number of 60 MEPs is expected to be cut to about 40 under PR. Under the old system, many of the incumbent MEPs

would retain their seats. This could mean that many old Labour MEPs, whom party chiefs had squeezed out using the PR system, would be more likely to remain in Strasbourg. Some candidates now in winnable positions might not get selected next time round. This could include the former *East-enders* Michael Cashman, and Claude Moraes, the director of the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants.

### Act is the weapon of last resort

THE Parliament Act gives the House of Commons the right to force through legislation without the Lords' agreement (James Landale writes).

If the European Elections Bill died, the Government could reintroduce it in the next session, which begins on Tuesday. The Government would use its majority and the "guillotine" to rush it through the Commons and send it to the Lords. The Speaker would certify the new Bill as being covered by the Parliament Act.

If the Lords rejected the new Bill, the Government could invoke the Act: it would gain Royal Assent and become law. But the peers would be unlikely to reject the Bill outright at Second Reading. They would probably want to debate and amend it and could in theory go on as long as they liked.

## Upper House has had the upper hand

## Labour is in a mess of its own making

By JAMES LANDALE  
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE House of Lords has already inflicted more defeats on Tony Blair's Government than the last Tory administration suffered during its worst single annual parliamentary session.

Even before yesterday's latest round

of legislative ping-pong, Labour had been defeated 38 times since last year's general election.

Most of the defeats — 36 — affected substantive legislation. The other two came on specific issues — an advisory vote against a minister who had been too rude to a peer and a symbolic vote against the beef-on-the-bone ban.

In contrast, the greatest Tory number of Lords defeats in one session (1985-86) was 22. Between 1979 and 1996, the average number was 13.5 a session. Although this analysis might look bleak to government business managers, they should remember Labour's defeats in the 1970s. Between 1974 and 1979, the Wilson and Callaghan Governments were defeated 362 times. In the 1975-76 session, Government defeats totalled 126.

One of 1998's most prominent defeats came when peers threw out a move to make the age of homosexual consent 16. Luckily for ministers, this did not count, being an unwhipped vote on an issue of conscience.

LABOUR has partly got itself to blame for the messy row over the European Elections Bill. The Government has certainly got a better case than is widely assumed and has constitutional precedent on its side over the powers of the Lords. But the Government has weakened its own position, as was shown by Tony Blair's edgy performance at Prime Minister's Questions.

Many Labour MPs are so unenthusiastic, if not outright hostile, less because of their doubts about closed lists than because of the way their party chose its candidates. The central imposition of candidates, switching Euro-MPs from one part of the country to another and pushing troublemakers to the bottom of regional lists, has caused a lot of resentment. This has undermined the legitimacy of the candidates and made it harder for Labour to defend closed lists. Labour would have had a stronger case if its candidates had been picked regionally on a one member/one vote basis as the Tory and Liberal Democrat ones were.

As I argued on Tuesday, the choice between open and closed lists is finely balanced rather than of great democratic principle. Closed lists allow parties to fix the order of candidates and so who will be elected first, while open lists permit voters to rank the order of candidates. But open lists encourage infighting between candi-

dates of the same party and produce perverse results.

Labour would have done better to offer a choice between a party list and voting for individual candidates. Although most voters would probably opt for the party list, there would, at least, have been a choice. At an earlier stage of the Bill, the Government did consider this option but believed it was confusing. Unfortunately, this is territory for psephological anoraks — as Jack Straw admits to being — and this compromise is not helped by being known as the



Belgian option. If Labour had adopted more democratic internal procedures to answer the "control freak" charge, and had offered a compromise, the Government might have been in a stronger position.

Yet the argument has moved on from the merits of closed versus open lists to cruder political calculations. Many Labour MPs, and ministers, would have been happier to retain first-past-the-post, not least because it is likely to produce more Labour MEPs in next June's elections than under proportional representation. Moreover, the unwilling-

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Fathers on death

blueprint spells ruin for business

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# Fathers will get cash on death of wife

By ALEXANDRA FREAN, SOCIAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

MEN with dependent children are to qualify for the first time for a special bereavement allowance on the death of their wives, under government plans to reform widows' benefits.

Alistair Darling, the Social Security Secretary, told the Commons yesterday that the reforms would rectify an inherent injustice in the current welfare system, which for half a century has allowed women men to claim a special "widows' benefit" when their spouse dies, but had provided nothing for men in a similar situation.

The move follows a decision by the Government not to contest a case brought in the European Court of Human Rights by a Kevin Willis, a widower from Bristol with two children who claimed that men should have the same benefits as women.

Mr Darling said that society had changed dramatically since the benefit was first introduced in 1948, when most women did not work and had

no pension of their own. "Today seven out of ten married women work. Almost as many as the eight out of ten men who work. The world has changed and the benefits system needs to reflect those changes," he said.

He added that it was simply unfair that the 15,000 husbands bereaved each year got no help. It was even more galling when one considered that 40 per cent of the bereaved women currently claiming widows' benefit were in the top half of the income bracket.

The purpose of the reforms is to target the money where it is most needed — namely, for child rearing. To achieve this, the Government is to withdraw the weekly widow's pension from widows with no children.

An estimated 20,000 women will lose entitlement to the benefit in the first year of the changes, to be introduced in April 2001.

At present around 300,000 women a year get a lump sum of £1,000 after their husbands



Kevin Willis took his case to Europe

die. A widowed mother with one child gets £74 a week, plus £1 for every other child. Widows aged over 45 get a pension of up to £64 a week.

Under the new system, all widows and widowers will get a lump sum of £2,000 on the death of their spouse. Those with dependent children will receive a weekly payment of around £85 a week.

But widows and widowers aged over 45 with no dependent children will receive a weekly benefit for only six months only. At present wid-

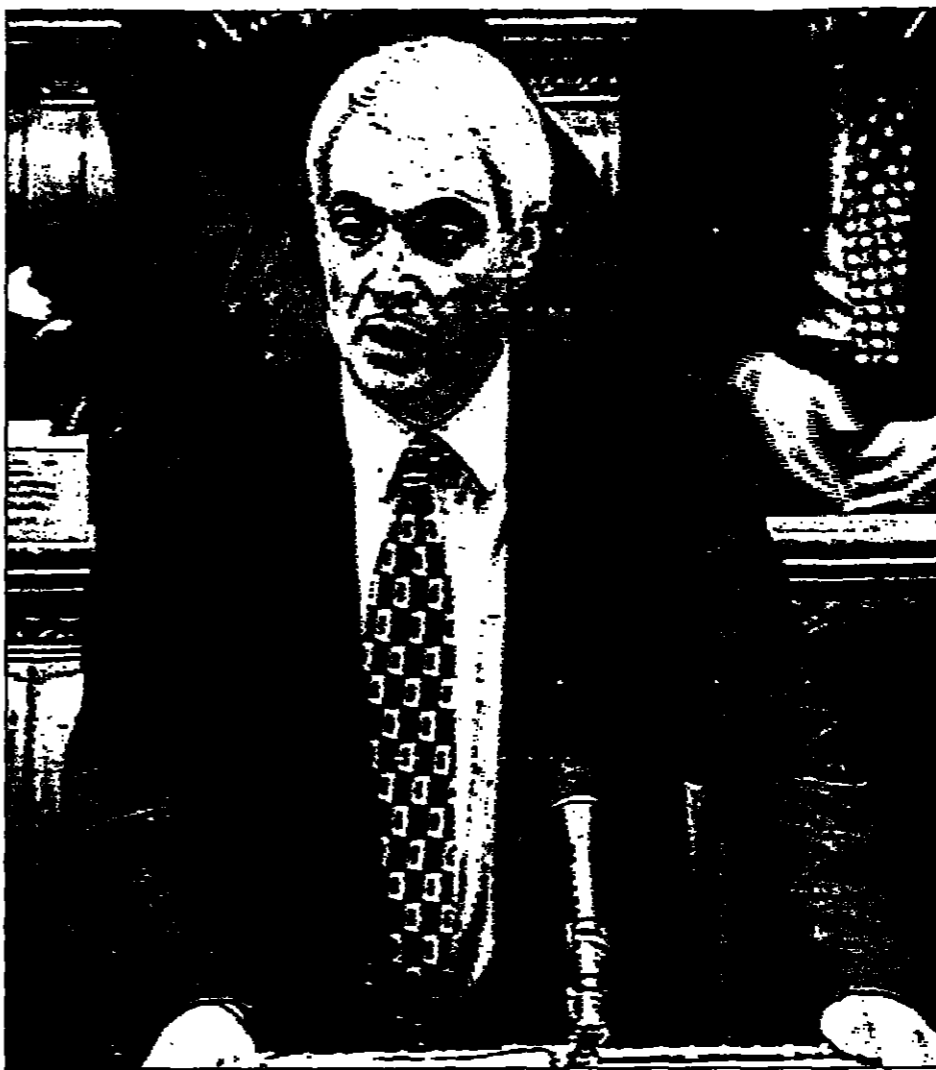
ow's benefit does not help people on income support as it is counted as part of their income. Under the new system, the first £10 of the benefit will be ignored when calculating income, to ensure that the poorest claimants are at least £10 a week better off.

The changes will cost around £140 million in the scheme's first year, but will gradually fall each year as all men eligible are brought into the net. By 2020, Mr Darling said, they would produce a saving of £500 million a year.

The Government had originally been expected to meanst widows' benefit, but decided against doing so amid fears of a revolt by Labour backbenchers.

Mr Willis, whose wife Marlene, a council housing officer died of cancer two years ago, described the reforms as a "victory for commonsense" and a great relief for his children, Ross, 7, and Natasha, 9.

"My children suffered a grievous loss when their mother died. It is unfair they should suffer financially because they lost her and not me."



Alistair Darling yesterday, rectifying what he called an inherent injustice in welfare

## February vote for Davies successor

By ROLAND WATSON

THE contest between Alun Michael and Rhodri Morgan to become first minister of Wales is likely to be delayed until February at the earliest, it emerged yesterday.

Welsh Labour Party chiefs meeting today will widen the voting mechanism to give every party member in Wales a say. The change to one member one vote should in theory help boost the chances of Mr Morgan, the maverick MP for Cardiff West, considering his strong support on the ground.

But supporters of Mr Michael, the new Welsh Secretary, believe that the extra time could help their man — Tony Blair's preferred runner — by giving him the chance to travel round the hustings. Until Ron Davies's resignation, he had shown little interest in the Welsh assembly.

Mr Michael's supporters say he is to base his campaign on attacking Welsh nationalists, bitter enemies at local government level, to outflank Mr Morgan, viewed as a softer touch on Plaid Cymru.

## Euro blueprint 'spells ruin for business'

By PHILIP WEBSTER, POLITICAL EDITOR

GORDON BROWN is signing up to a new policy blueprint for Europe that spells ruin for business, the Conservatives will claim today.

As Oskar Lafontaine, the German finance minister, holds talks with the Chancellor in London, John Redwood will say that he is agreeing to proposals that will mean higher taxes, damage to investment in the City of London and more regulations of labour and market products.

The shadow industry minister will say in a lecture to Cambridge University that the new left-wing policy manifesto *The New European Way — Economic Reform in the Framework of EMU* means that Mr Lafontaine is asking the rest of Europe to sign up to the same higher taxes and costly regulations that will be imposed in Germany.

"Mr Brown has fallen for it, hook line and sinker," he will say.

Downing Street and the Treasury yesterday denounced the reaction to the document as "hysterical" and pointed out that it had been drawn up by senior British officials close to Mr Brown. "It is

hardly going to be a raving Left document with that authorship," one said. The Prime Minister's spokesman said it contained a "New Labour agenda".

Mr Redwood will accuse Europe's socialist governments of aiming for a "socialist fortress Europe" to defend them against global capitalism.

"They will discover, if they are allowed to build it, that it is as proof against the forces of international capital as a sandcastle built beneath the high tide mark. Fortress Europe will damage our ability to prosper in a dynamic world economy but it will not protect us from the forces of international money and trade."

A multi-millionaire businessman who wants to reduce Britain's involvement in the European Union formally launched a new political party yesterday.

The Democratic Party will be led by its founder and backer Geoff Southall, 58, who worked as an agent for the late Sir James Goldsmith at the last general election. Mr Southall said that the Democratic Party would campaign on a wide sweep of issues.

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# Short warns against quick fix on debt

### Minister tells Church that campaign to aid Third World could line pockets of tyrants, writes Dominic Kennedy

THE church-backed campaign to cancel Third World debt for the millennium was criticised yesterday by Clare Short, the International Development Secretary. She said that the move would penalise poor countries that paid their debts, and risked enriching tyrants.

Ms Short told the General Synod of the Church of England: "Poverty is not all the fault of evil Western bankers. Corrupt dictators, weak and craven governments hold back their people across the world. We should not call for debt to be relieved if the result would be more spending on arms or palaces or corruption."

Ms Short risked stepping into a lions' den by giving her message directly to church leaders, who are among the most prominent backers of the Jubilee 2000 campaign to write off debts.

She had been warmly introduced to the synod by Dr George Carey, the Archbishop of Canterbury, who in Addis Ababa in January said that more people faced death because of debt than were killed by the Atlantic slave trade.

He told his African audience that the critics of debt release were "likely to focus on images of corrupt and dictatorial governments, tribalism, arms

sales to governments that violently suppress their own people, and so on."

Ms Short won two standing ovations after arguing that campaigners were mistaken in demanding unconditional debt relief and unilateral action by Britain rather than a united approach by Western countries. She called for the international campaign for debt cancellation to be broadened into a wider alliance to eliminate poverty.

"There is a real danger that good people will believe that debt relief is the 'magic bullet' to end all poverty, and that debt is the cause of poverty. This is untrue," Ms Short told



Short said poverty not all fault of evil bankers

the synod, meeting in London. "Debt relief should not go to all poor countries; it should support those committed to poverty eradication. It should not be unconditional and it is not better if it is unilateral. These are slogans. Some very poor countries are not heavily

indebted because they struggled to pay their debts. If debt relief is our only answer, they get no help."

Bangladesh, devastated by floods and one of the poorest countries in the world, had little foreign debt and neither had Malawi, she said.

She criticised Jubilee 2000 for demanding unilateral action, pointing out, for example, that the Central American nations badly damaged by Hurricane Mitch had little debt to Britain. "We could go and say we will write off unilaterally. It might impress the press, but it's not the right way to go."

She also argued against campaigners who wanted to write off "odious debt", such as that bequeathed by South Africa's apartheid rulers to the Government headed by Nelson Mandela.

"The ANC Government - people who suffered and died and were tortured and imprisoned - have decided for the sake of their country and its economic reputation that they are going to pay it. We should not be telling them this is odious and they should not pay it; we should be supporting their right to decide the best way to manage their country."

A Lambeth Palace source said that Ms Short's speech was not considered critical of Dr Carey. "The archbishop agrees entirely that debt relief is part of a global campaign to relieve poverty and it is the shared objective of Church and Government to eliminate poverty."



Anthony Onyekwely checks crypts at the mausoleum in Streatham Park cemetery

## High-rise answer to shortage of graves

By ALEXANDRA FREAN SOCIAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

A CEMETERY in South London has found an ingenious solution to the problem of where to put the dead now that many burial grounds are nearly full. Instead of burying people, the cemetery in Streatham Park has opened Britain's first multi-storey mausoleum.

The square, polished granite structure, about the size of a large house, is the first community mausoleum to be built in Britain this century. Big enough to house 180 coffins, it has already found four occupants since it opened in September. Prices start at £6,000.

Jane Farrin, of Service Corporation International, the American company that owns the cemetery, said two of four smaller "family sized" mausoleums attached to the main structure had been sold for up to £100,000 each. The walls of the building are made of grids of granite tiles stacked on top of each other. There are five horizontal layers and six vertical columns.

Unlike Victorian mausoleums, which were underground, coffins are placed in niches on the outside. They can be lifted and coffins put in place by a hydraulic lift. Relatives can place memorial plaques on their tile or decorate it with flowers. A portico protects visitors from rain.

SCI has put in a planning application to build another mausoleum in Leatherhead.

### BIGGER ROLE FOR DEACONS

Deacons should be more of a ministry in their own right and less a staging post to becoming a priest, the Synod was told. Lifelong deacons could spread the Church's message as youth workers, social workers and in industry, commerce, tourism and local government, the Right Rev Stephen Sykes, the Bishop of Ely, said.

The synod voted overwhelmingly to review the role of deacons, one of the three orders of ministry in the Church of England. Their traditional task was to assist the priest, especially to distribute Holy Communion, read scriptures, instruct youth in the catechism, to baptise and preach.

Sue Page, a lay member from Norwich diocese, said: "They may be postmistresses, they may be teachers, they may be mothers at home or even fathers at home or even single parents. It is a church order, but out in the world."

## Clergy urged to fight big business for funerals

By DOMINIC KENNEDY

THE Church of England was urged to consider setting up a freephone dial-a-funeral service to compete with multinational firms of undertakers. A Church-run "pay now, die later" insurance scheme, rivaling commercial policies, was also suggested at the General Synod.

The ideas came from Tom Sutcliffe, a lay member, who was proposing a motion regretting the commercial pressures on some funeral directors which he said discouraged funerals in parish churches and concealed or denied the pastoral and spiritual truths of death and dying.

"Many small firms of funeral directors, still trading under their old family names, were bought up to become part of Service Corporation International plc. Funerals are a thriving multimillion-pound market," said Mr Sutcliffe, of Southwark diocese in London. "Unless our clergy get their

acts together they will be bypassed by funeral directors as too inefficient and costly; inefficient because clergy often cannot be reliably contacted when funeral arrangements are being made; costly because clergy will encourage the use of our parish churches, and that will cut down funeral turnover and reduce profits or inflate charges."

Mr Sutcliffe asked the synod: "How often now can one get a priest at the end of the phone, rather than a taped message? And how many people who have just suffered a profound loss, a new widow, say, want to confide such an intense personal thing as grief to a recording machine and then wait to see if anybody calls back?"

"Undertakers and funeral directors, dedicated to being professionally nice, can be a bit gruesome. Their respect for 'the deceased' earns a substantial fee. Their business is neces-

sary. Unfortunately we, their clients, are always vulnerable people and that's a disadvantage. Questioning the fees or shopping around may suggest you don't care enough for the dead."

The synod was asked to consider reusing old graves for new corpses because churchyards are running out of space. "In other countries which have different burial traditions, it is accepted that a grave is the hallowed site for a process of material change rather than a perpetual resting place for remains," said a report prepared for the debate by the Church's group on funeral services.

The synod overwhelmingly supported the motion regretting that commercial pressures discouraged church funerals. The motion also called for a possible review of the law covering the reuse of graves and the reopening of closed churchyards.

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# Currie condemns Tory 'incompetence' on BSE

Former minister tells inquiry that 'crass' attitudes made the problem worse, reports Michael Hornsby

EDWINA CURRIE, the former Health Minister, has attacked other Tory ex-ministers for their handling of "mad cow" disease and other public health risks. In written evidence to the BSE inquiry, she condemns their performance at the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food as "crass and incompetent" and says their officials were "blockheadedly ignorant".

Mrs Currie, who was forced to resign from her ministerial position in 1988 after the salmonella-in-eggs furore, will open a new phase in the inquiry next Monday, as the first of more than 20 former Tory ministers giving evidence over the next three weeks.

Five presided over the Ministry of Agriculture during the last Government - John MacGregor, John Gummer, Gillian Shephard, William Walde-

grave and Douglas Hogg. Also scheduled to appear are Kenneth Clarke, Virginia Bottomley and Stephen Dorrell, all former Health Secretaries. The former Prime Ministers Baroness Thatcher and John Major have been invited to submit statements and may be called to give oral evidence.

In her statement, Mrs Currie says: "I consider that the entire approach of MAFF from the 1980s onward to issues of public health linked to infection in the food chain was wrong."

"It was crass, incompetent, hostile, dangerous and compounded problems instead of eradicating them. The ministry that should have been responsible for clean food instead supported and connived at the worst operations in farming and animal husbandry, derided accurate warnings

### WHO'S WHO IN THE INQUIRY

Inquiry chaired by Sir Nicholas Phillips, Court of Appeal judge who presided over the Maxwell case. The two other committee members are June Bridgeman, former senior civil servant, and Malcolm Ferguson-Smith, professor of pathology at Cambridge. Inquiry set up on December 22, 1997, and opened on March 9. So far 83 days of hearings have been held and 287 witnesses have given oral and written evidence. Some 3,000 lever-arch files of documents have been collected. Their weight is so great that structural engineers have had to be called to test the strength of the floor. The inquiry is expected to report by June 30.

and were blockheadedly ignorant of good practice elsewhere. The ministry made fierce and intimidating attempts to put down criticism instead of considering it carefully and objectively."

She also criticises the "poor contacts" at ministerial level between the ministry and the Department of Health, and accuses the ministry of setting itself up as a "trade union" for farmers. "This was an astonishing position for a Conservative administration to maintain, which elsewhere was

keen to promote competition and put the needs of consumers first."

The ministry "worked on the assumption that the public was stupid" and incapable of grasping the difference between different levels of risk. This led to "bland assertions" by ministers that "there was no risk to human health from BSE, when what was meant was that there was only a tiny risk, unquantifiable but known to be remote".

Mrs Currie left office in December 1988, after provoking a

dramatic collapse in egg sales by claiming that most egg production in Britain was infected with salmonella. Mrs Currie says that the ministry responded to her claim by refusing "to believe that a foodstuff as widespread and innocuous as eggs could be the cause of a food-poisoning epidemic".

When she wrote an account of her time in Government, ministry officials tried to get sections of the manuscript deleted, she claims. She says she resigned after being told that egg producers were threatening the Government with writs, but this had turned out to be untrue.

Mrs Currie told *The Times* yesterday: "I am not singling out any one minister for criticism. The whole approach of MAFF was wrong. It was only concerned with the economic state of its industry. It had no interest whatever in the public health aspects of the production of food."

Mrs Currie said that she believed the ministry had not devoted the effort it should have done to some crucial BSE re-



Edwina Currie: "The ministry connived at the worst operations in farming"

search because it was afraid of what the results might be. "There is still no diagnostic test for BSE in living animals. This is outrageous. I mean, we have slaughtered millions and millions of them. My suggestion, my deep, dark hint, is that MAFF did not want a test because they did not want to know how serious the problem was. As long as MAFF could

keep saying, 'It is not a problem,' or, 'It is under control,' then they could satisfy their ministers and attempt to satisfy the public. But, of course, there was a problem and it was not under control."

Mrs Currie will be the 288th witness to give oral and written evidence to the inquiry since it opened on March 9 in Lambeth, southeast London.

Distrust and lack of co-operation between the Ministry of Agriculture and the Department of Health has been a persistent theme. While ministry officials have insisted that public health was a top priority and that they concealed nothing, their counterparts in the Department of Health have spoken of a suspicion that they were being kept in the dark.

### HISTORY OF MISTAKES AND DELAYS

Among the main facts to emerge so far:

- First case of BSE was diagnosed in December 1985. Finding dismissed as inconclusive by Gerald Wells, head of neuropathology at the Central Veterinary Laboratory, who realised his mistake 21 months later.
- Ministry vets and scientists knew for sure of the existence of BSE from November 1986, but the Government's Chief Medical Officer was not told until 16 months later, in March 1988.
- The ministry banned the use of meat and bone meal (the suspected source of BSE) in cattle feed in July 1988, but did not recall unused stocks from farms or those already ordered from feed merchants. That probably allowed up to 32,000 more cattle to be infected with BSE.
- Professor Richard Southwood, in his report in February 1989, said that BSE posed a "remote" risk to human beings, but failed to recommend an immediate ban on consumption of all potentially dangerous cattle parts. This was not done until nine months later.
- As early as 1990 the ministry was aware of concern that abattoirs were not enforcing controls to keep infected material out of the food chain, but did nothing serious about it until 1995.

### WHO WILL GIVE EVIDENCE NEXT

**JOHN MacGREGOR**  
Minister of Agriculture, 1987-1989

Scheduled to appear before inquiry on December 2. In office during crucial early period when first BSE cases emerged. Shown initially to have opposed any government funding for BSE cattle slaughter, delaying action against the disease. Credited, however, with pushing through the cattle offal ban in 1989, allegedly against resistance from his own officials.



**JOHN GUMMER**  
Minister of Agriculture 1989-93



Scheduled to appear before the inquiry on December 8. Criticised for saying in 1990 that beef was "perfectly safe" to eat and for allegedly putting pressure on Chief Medical Officer to back such statements. Expected to put up vigorous defence of his role, arguing that such criticisms are based on hindsight and not on the reality at the time.

**DOUGLAS HOGG**  
Minister of Agriculture 1995-1997 (May)

Scheduled to appear on December 16. Had bad luck to be in office when likely link between BSE and CJD discovered. To some extent carried the can for inaction of predecessors. Took steps to tighten crucial abattoir controls. Also wanted the Government to hold judicial inquiry into BSE but was turned down by rest of the Cabinet.



**STEPHEN DORRELL**  
Health Secretary 1995-1997 (May)




Scheduled to appear on November 30. Made fateful disclosure to Parliament on March 20, 1996, that BSE was probable cause of new variant CJD. Has been criticised for implying that the risk ended in 1989, even though he knew that infected material could have been entering food chain long after that because of failures of abattoir controls.

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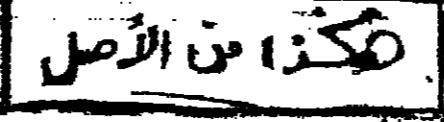
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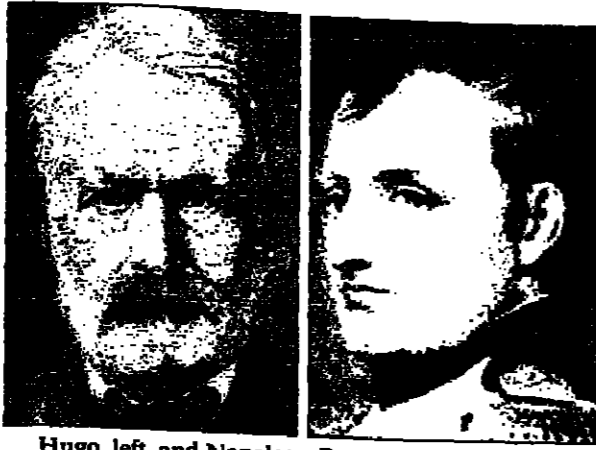
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# Fans of euro recruit Napoleon for hard-sell currency campaign



Hugo, left, and Napoleon Bonaparte: put forward as backers of a single European currency

HISTORY'S big guns, from Plato to Napoleon to Victor Hugo, have been wheeled out to endorse the single European currency as the French propaganda campaign for the euro's launch — only 42 days away — begins in earnest. Historians have been trawling archives to demonstrate that the great and good have always supported the idea, even if they did not know it.

## Even Plato was in favour of monetary union, reports Ben Macintyre in Paris

whole of Europe, which will be a great advantage to trade." The writer Victor Hugo (Acts and Words) written in 1855, argued for the establishment of "a continental currency, both metallic and fiduciary, covering the whole of Europe and driven by the free activity of 200 million people; this money would replace and absorb all today's absurd varieties of coin, with their images of princelings, those symbols of misery."

different currencies was had economics, although his reasoning was vague. "This monetary variety is a cause of impoverishment for, in the comings and goings of cash, to increase the variety is to increase the friction; to increase the friction is to reduce the circulation. In money, as in everything else, circulation is unity."

ideal model of the city, Plato tackled the question of monetary uniformity, writes Catherine Véglia. "Innumerable sorts of coinage circulated among the hundreds of Greek towns, and the philosopher proposed a communal money that would be reserved for public expenses, wars, diplomacy and external commerce."

flourished in economic treatises of the 16th century," Ms Véglia writes. The economist Johann Agricola of Eisleben, for example, offered a view that would not sound out of place in modern Brussels: "If we only had a single God... a single currency and coins of good alloy, then everything would be fine in the world."

Anatole Kaletsky, page 24

# Rome asylum hint provokes Ankara anger

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME

ABDULLAH OCALAN, the fugitive separatist Kurdish leader arrested in Rome a week ago, appeared yesterday for Italy's main condition for granting him political asylum by declaring that he had renounced terrorism.

He also appealed to Italy to "mediate between us and Turkey to find a political solution to the Kurdish question". The move brought Italy closer to an outright confrontation with Turkey, which has demanded Mr Ocalan's extradition repeatedly. "Italy to give Ocalan asylum" was the blunt prediction in *La Repubblica*.

In Ankara, Mesut Yilmaz, the Turkish Prime Minister, said that giving asylum to Mr Ocalan would make Italy "an accomplice to terrorism". To thunderous applause, he told MPs: "No government of the Turkish republic would ever forget this."

Massimo D'Alema, the Italian Prime Minister, told the Rome parliament on Tuesday that the renunciation of terrorism by Mr Ocalan was "the minimum we require for our country to be able to process his request for asylum... Italy does not intend to act as host to terrorist activities".

strators in Rome set fire to himself in protest yesterday afternoon. His fellow demonstrators tried to smother the flames, but Red Cross officials said the man had been taken to hospital with severe burns. A Kurdish man, 25, who set himself alight in Moscow in a similar protest on Tuesday has died in hospital.

In Turkey, anti-Italian protests continued to grow, with thousands of protesters gathering outside the Italian Embassy in Ankara and the consulate in Istanbul to demand Mr Ocalan's extradition.

Mr Ocalan, 49, was arrested after arriving on a flight from Moscow last Thursday. Ankara says that Mr Ocalan, who founded the PKK (Kurdish Workers' Party) in 1978, is responsible for the 30,000 deaths caused by the Kurdish insurgency in southeastern Turkey over the past 14 years.

Fears that Italy is about to give asylum to a man Ankara has detested and hunted for 20 years have sparked a wave of anti-Italian feeling in Turkey, with attacks on Italian-owned businesses. There have also been clashes between Kurds and Turks in Brussels, Bonn and other European cities.

Washington urged Signor D'Alema this week to hand Mr Ocalan to Turkey, arguing that he was "a terrorist who should be denied asylum". But the Italian Constitution forbids the extradition of a suspect to any country where the death penalty is in force. Officials in Ankara say that the Turkish parliament is preparing to abolish the death penalty, which has not been applied since 1984. But Italian officials remain sceptical.

In a disclosure likely to cause Signor D'Alema's centre-left Government further embarrassment, *Corriere della Sera* reported yesterday that Mr Ocalan had come to Rome after learning of an appeal on his behalf by 50 Green, left-wing and Communist MPs and senators, who had assured him that Italy would give him refuge.

The Italian Left is sympathetic to the PKK: the PKK-dominated "Kurdish parliament in exile" was allowed to meet in the Italian parliament recently, to Ankara's fury.

In an interview with *La Repubblica* yesterday, Mr Ocalan said that the PKK had abandoned terrorism and he was ready to give up the armed struggle. He said he hoped Italy would not betray him by handing him over to Turkey or to Germany, where he is also wanted on murder charges.



Tibetan poachers have traditionally killed the antelope for its meat and fur. They tie the animal's horns to their gun barrels to help them aim

# Chinese poachers slaughter rare Tibet antelope

BY MICHAEL DYNES

CHINESE poachers are using automatic weapons to harvest the fur of the exotic Tibetan antelope, the *chiru*, according to an account by a leading French anthropologist.

Large numbers of the endangered species are being killed illegally to make the world's most expensive shawls which fetch thousands of pounds in London, Paris and New York.

The animals are slaughtered with the tacit approval of the Chinese authorities, according to Michel Peissel, the noted French explorer, who has just returned from his 28th expedition to Changthang, Tibet's empty quarter.

The antelope hides feed the lucrative trade in *shahtoosh*, the so-called "king of wools", which has been declared illegal throughout much of the world since the 1970s.

An attempt to protect Tibet's endangered wildlife by creating a national park has done little to safeguard the antelope. The park is administered by the Tibetan forestry department, "which has turned a blind eye to the slaughter", M Peissel said.

Tibetan hunters, equipped with muzzle-loaded shotguns, have traditionally killed the antelope for meat and fur. But Chinese poachers are killing on a huge scale, M Peissel said. The explorer's grizzly discovery was made during his most recent expedition to Changthang, a region the size of Greenland, and one of the largest unspoiled ecological zones after the South Pole.

An account of an earlier expedition to the empty quarter in 1994, during which M Peissel discovered the source of the Mekong river, in the upper reaches of Tibet, is published in a new book, *The Last Barbarians*, released today.

During his latest expedition, M Peissel also stumbled upon traces of the legendary pre-Buddhist kingdom of Shang Shung, which flourished between the first and sixth centuries before the unification of Tibet in 645 by Songtsen Gampo, the country's first great king.

While searching for neolithic salt routes, M Peissel discovered a cluster of dome-shaped structures, used by nomads for shelter during the region's bitter winters, which appear to have originated from the period when trade flourished between the pre-Buddhist kingdom and the Persian empire, M Peissel said.



The dome-shaped buildings which may date from the early Shang Shung kingdom

Act is the weapon of last resort  
The Parliament has given the House of Commons the right to force through legislation without the Lords' agreement (House of Lords writes)  
If the European Election Bill died, the Government could reintroduce it in the next session, which begins on Tuesday. The Government would seek to pass it through the Lords. The Speaker will certify the new Bill if it is not covered by the Parliament Act.  
The Lords rejected the Bill. The Government will now try to pass it through the House of Commons. The Bill will be introduced in the House of Commons on Tuesday. The Government would seek to pass it through the Lords. The Speaker will certify the new Bill if it is not covered by the Parliament Act.

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**Marcos victory on gold fortune**

Honolulu: The Hawaii Supreme Court has reversed a \$22 billion (£13 billion) judgment against Ferdinand Marcos, the late former President of the Philippines, and his wife Imelda for allegedly stealing gold bullion from a treasure hunter. With interest, that award had increased to \$43 billion.

The court said on Tuesday that the evidence was too speculative to support the claim by the late Roger Roxas that he discovered boxes containing \$22 billion of gold bullion while hunting for treasure north of Manila in 1971.

Roxas said that Marcos learnt of the discovery and ordered his troops to confiscate whatever gold Roxas had found. The booty included a golden Buddha.

The treasure is believed to have been buried by Japanese troops while they occupied the area during the Second World War. (AP)

**Drink ban threatens the peacekeepers**

UNITED NATIONS peacekeepers in Cyprus are in a mutinous mood after their newly installed woman chief cracked down on drinking and undermined the popular annual golf tournament.

Dame Ann Hercus, the tough new UN head from New Zealand, has thrown into disarray the drinking habits of the peacekeepers, including Britain's 320 Blue Berets, by ordering several bars in UN areas of the divided island to close at midnight.

Golfers received the news as they were teeing up for this weekend's all-island championship at the UN's headquarters in Nicosia. The tournament is being sponsored by a leading whisky company.

While the 60 or so participants will not be able to buy anything stronger than a Coke at the bar, they will be allowed to savour the first prize — a three-litre bottle of Ballantines — provided the winner is in generous mood. Golfers have been told they can bring their own liquor to the club and

**Cyprus crackdown on duty-free sales risks UN mutiny, writes Michael Theodoulou in Nicosia**

store it in lockers. The sales ban was announced in a letter to the club's 80 members, including British diplomats and expatriates, from Colonel Chris Coats, the UN's chief of staff. However, Col Coats, an enthusiastic golfer himself, is not being blamed for emptying the bar's shelves of all but soft drinks, peanuts and crisps. The rumblings of discontent are directed at Dame Ann, who headed the review. "She's got a real puritanical streak," one officer said.

The ban on alcohol sales was the result of a "routine review" of recreational facilities, a UN statement said yesterday. But Cypriot sources linked the ban to investigations into the apparent illegal sale to the local tourist market of up to \$2 million (£1.25 million) of duty-free alcohol and

tobacco by UN personnel. Preliminary indications were that Irish personnel were among those involved. However, a formal report sent to UN headquarters two weeks ago reportedly gave the golf club bar a clean bill of health.

There are suspicions that the real reason for the ban was a recent incident in which a Norwegian civilian staff member allegedly refused to stop for a breath test after leaving the bar and ploughed his vehicle into police barricades. Col Coats reminded staff they were under the jurisdiction of military police and random breath tests were UN policy.

Dame Ann, admired as dynamic by some but regarded as abrasive by her critics, is said to have been responsible for some blood-letting among staff since her arrival in the

summer. The UN's long-standing spokesman in Nicosia, Waldemar Rokosewki, a Pole, recently exchanged his job on the sunny island for a hardship posting in Dushanbe, the capital of Tajikistan, partly because of a reported clash of personalities.

"The softest thing about Dame Ann is her teeth," said a source at UN headquarters in New York.

Her main task is promoting a settlement of the island's seemingly intractable problem and a diplomat in Nicosia said she was doing "an excellent job in difficult circumstances".

More changes are certainly on the cards, among them a decision by Dame Ann to actively pursue a general directive from New York to tackle male chauvinism. From January, British and other peacekeepers will have to attend a workshop on the use of "gender-sensitive language" after the UN deemed that too many internal memos, documents and publications were addressed to male personnel only.



Dame Ann Hercus: image of a no-nonsense woman with a puritanical streak

Mugabe property white fa

**Cash-hit republic seeks break from Russian rule**

FROM ANNA BLUNDY IN MOSCOW

THE charismatic 36-year-old millionaire President of the Buddhist autonomous republic of Kalmykia has announced that it may secede from Russia if federal government subsidies fail to arrive.

Kirsan Ilyumzhinov accuses Russia of imposing a blockade and insists that since Kalmykia has, in effect, been removed from the Russian Federation, he would like that status formalised. He says Kalmykia should be an associated member of the federation rather than a constituent republic.

"Whereas Chechnya is still receiving certain sums of federal money, Kalmykia is not getting anything for paying student grants, or for vaccinating children, or for keeping maternity homes or for implementing a programme for combating plague," Mr Ilyumzhinov said on Russian television. "So, in fact, we are not a part of Russia. If this is so, we shall urge Moscow to give us the status of an associated member, or just secede."

His stance is more a request for funds than a declaration of war, but after the disastrous attempted secession by Chechnya, resulting in the bloody 1994-96 war with Russia, Moscow is keen to keep its re-

publics and regions in tow. Many areas have gained some autonomy, especially over finances, and when the economic crisis paralysed Russia's banking system in August, Mr Ilyumzhinov refused to pay \$200 million (£120 million) in taxes and set about printing money. Moscow retaliated by suspending credits to Kalmykia and shutting the central bank's local branch.

President Yeltsin has instructed Nikolai Borduzha, the Security Council Secretary, to hold an emergency meeting to review the constitutional issues.

Kalmykia is a sparsely populated expanse of steppe on the western shore of the Caspian Sea, recently the host of the 33rd International Chess Olympiad, held in a barely completed Chess City built for the occasion. Although Mr Ilyumzhinov is a billionaire, the republic is extremely poor.

□ Riga: Latvia, the former Soviet republic, yesterday celebrated the 80th anniversary of its earlier brief proclamation of independence against a background of continuing sensitivity over the 40 years of Soviet occupation and controversy about the Baltic state's treatment of its Russian minority.

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# Mugabe seizes property of 841 white farmers

FROM JAN RAATHI IN HARARE

PRESIDENT MUGABE of Zimbabwe has issued orders for the immediate seizure of 841 white-owned farms, covering 5.5 million acres. Copies of an "acquisition of land" order began arriving in farmers' postboxes yesterday.

The land becomes the property of the Government as soon as the farmer receives the notice. Nick Swanepoel, president of the Commercial Farmers' Union, said he had been told by the Ministry of Agriculture yesterday how many farms were being taken, but said they would not name the properties. He had been given no other information. The decision has been taken by a Government that is being bankrupted by a war in the Congo and which has more than enough land for its plan to resettle black peasants. It contradicts every assurance given by Mr Mugabe to farmers and Western governments that his land redistribution programme would be fair and transparent. It is seen as the most bizarre of a series of reckless decisions by Mr Mugabe in the past year.

The confiscation orders began arriving as Zimbabwe was paralysed by a one-day na-

tional strike — the second in eight days — called by the labour movement to press its demands for a 20 per cent across-the-board wage increase, a cut in a 70 per cent fuel price increase last month and for negotiations on economic reforms. There is also fear that the orders may aggravate a wave of lawlessness on white-owned farms where hundreds of militant veterans of Zimbabwe's independence war, many of them armed, have mounted a campaign of harassment to drive off the owners. It is also expected to inflict severe damage on the economy and on the currency, which has fallen 85 per cent in the past year.

Farm union sources said that the International Monetary Fund had responded to the news by saying that a \$55 million (£34.5 million) loan under consideration had been killed "stone dead". "There is a real danger of irreparable harm being done by this," a Western diplomat said. "This is the typical approach. As soon as things start getting all pear-shaped, we get back to the land and bash the white farmers."

Mr Swanepoel said he would be seeking a meeting

with Mr Mugabe. "I am shocked," he said. "This is not what I believed would happen after the co-operation between ourselves and the Ministry of Agriculture."

The orders were signed by Kumbirai Kangai, the Minister of Agriculture, last Friday. Immediately afterwards he left on a three-week foreign trip. There can be little doubt, however, that the decision was Mr Mugabe's. Under Zimbabwe's land laws, the Government has 60 days in which to have the orders confirmed by a court, and the farmers have to be paid full compensation for their farms a week after that. If any of these steps is omitted, the property reverts to the farmer.

The Government started to seize 1,471 farms last year, but appeared to change its mind after donor-nation pressure.



Jürgen Kremb, a reporter for the German magazine Der Spiegel, in his almost empty Beijing flat yesterday after being ordered to leave China within 48 hours (James Pringle writes). The state security police accused

## China expels journalist

him of illegally obtaining government secrets. Herr Kremb had just returned from Singapore, where he is now based, to cover a jazz festival. He said eight officials came into his office, manhandled him, and told him he had to leave the country and could not return for five

years. He is the second reporter expelled in two months. The other was a Japanese accused of obtaining state secrets. The German Foreign Ministry said the expulsion was "disproportionate and unacceptable".

years. He is the second reporter expelled in two months. The other was a Japanese accused of obtaining state secrets. The German Foreign Ministry said the expulsion was "disproportionate and unacceptable".

## Beijing brothel madam to be shot

FROM JAMES PRINGLE IN BEIJING

THE madam of a Beijing brothel has been sentenced to death, and may already have been shot, for procuring girls for prostitution, China's main newspapers said yesterday.

But whether the sentence on Ma Yulan, 41, signalled a crackdown on prostitution, which has spread in China in the past year or two as HIV levels have also soared, or whether the madam had crossed some senior figure, is a matter of conjecture.

Eight other defendants, probably young prostitutes, were sentenced to between 18 months and eight years in jail on Tuesday. The court heard that Ma had arranged and hosted prostitution while running a restaurant and bathhouse, and at the health club of the hotel she partly owned.

The case is baffling because the Public Security Bureau and the People's Liberation Army and firms affiliated with them have interests in many prostitution front businesses.

NEWS IN BRIEF

### 5m cars 'at risk from lead ban'

More than five million cars in Britain could be at risk from a ban on leaded petrol that is expected to be introduced in January 2000. Peter Barlow, of the Motor Industry Federation, said a seminar that he had attended indicated that the ban would be introduced in a phased manner. He said that the ban would be introduced in a phased manner, with the first phase starting in January 2000. He said that the ban would be introduced in a phased manner, with the first phase starting in January 2000.

### Killer wasps

Wasps caused a fatal attack on a farmer in a field in Lincolnshire. The farmer was killed by a wasp that had stung him in the neck. The wasp was identified as a killer wasp, which is known for its aggressive behaviour. The farmer was taken to hospital but died of his injuries.

### Shadow cleared

A shadow cast by a building in a park in London has been cleared. The shadow was caused by a building that was under construction. The shadow was cleared by the removal of the building. The shadow was cleared by the removal of the building.

## Actor's mistress sues his daughter

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME



Mastroianni: his final film led to controversy

NEARLY two years after the death of the Italian film actor Marcello Mastroianni, the feuding women in his life are to face each other today in a Bologna court in a libel case arising from his last film.

Mastroianni, the archetypal Latin lover both on screen and in real life, died in Paris in December 1996, mourned by Flora Carabella, his long-suffering wife; but also by a host of other women, including the French actress Catherine Deneuve, with whom he had a long relationship, the American actress Faye Dunaway, Sophia Loren, with whom he made several films, and Anna Maria Tatò, a film producer who was his last companion. Signora Tatò has long been at odds with both Chiara Mastroianni, the actor's daughter

by Catherine Deneuve, and Barbara, his daughter by his wife Flora.

Yesterday Signora Tatò said that she had no choice but to sue Chiara for libel over remarks she made in print last year about *I Remember*, a film made by Signora Tatò in which the dying Mastroianni reminisces about his life.

Chiara said she stood by an interview she gave *Il Resto di Carlino*, the Bologna newspaper, in which she made accusations against Signora Tatò. Signora Tatò told *La Stampa*: "I am above all suspicion."

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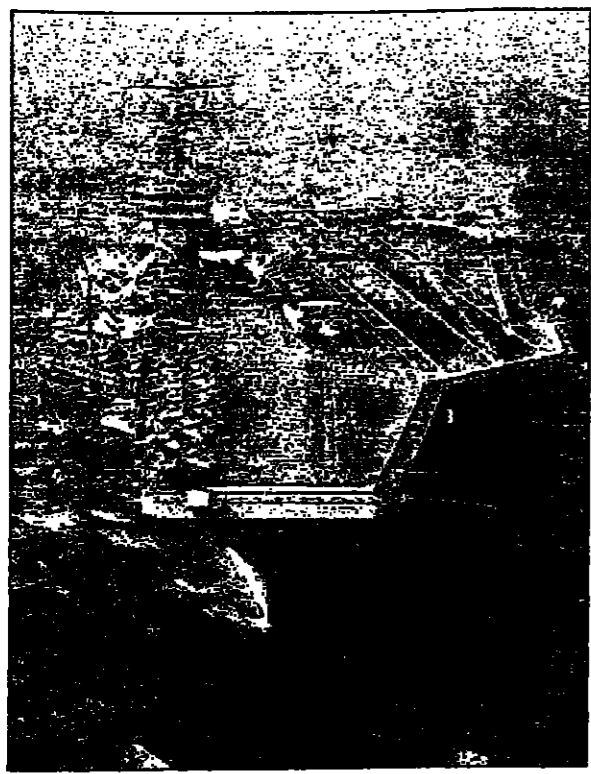
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# How US leviathan signalled deadly warning to Saddam

Anthony Loyd looks at the array of 'toys' in the Gulf on the USS Eisenhower



The USS Eisenhower on Iraq duty in the Gulf

## World of burgers and brute force

AMERICANS call it 95,000 tons of diplomacy, and if the weapons of the USS Eisenhower were not bad enough to present a threat, then the warship's details are certainly big enough to do so (Anthony Loyd writes).

Powered by two nuclear reactors that could keep the ship moving at 30 knots for 18 years without refuelling, it has a flight deck of more than 4.5 acres that can support up to 100 aircraft. Each of the four 21ft screws weighs 22,000lb; each anchor chain link, 365lb. The 4,700 crew, average age 21, can be supplemented by another 1,500, and are a mixture of young ghetto kids, country boys and older

specialists. For all its technology, it is a place of stinking aviation fuel, dim lighting, noise and intense physical labour that has many crew snatching sleep whenever they can.

It has television and radio stations as well as a website, firestations, hospital, post office and weather bureau. The laundry tackles more than 6,000lb of washing a day; the bakery makes more than 700 loaves. It carries provisions to sustain its crew for more than three months.

Alcohol is forbidden. Although cooks make nearly 3,000 hamburgers a day, cola consumption and chosen brand are undisclosed.



Crew on the aircraft carrier clean an F18 fighter

IN A strange and silent world of perpetual glowing orange light lies a hint, weighing more than 4½ million lb, of what awaited Iraq had the American-led operation to bomb not been called off minutes before execution. It is the massed array of high-tech explosive ordinance stored in the 50 magazines of the aircraft carrier USS Eisenhower, itself a war machine the size of the Empire State Building.

Sparrow, Sidewinder, Amraam, Maverick, Harm and Hellfire: the so-called 'toys' have names ranging from the banal to the demonic. Secrecy surrounds some of the newer systems, such as the JSOW, the Joint Stand-Off Weapon, a gliding free-fall bomb whose capabilities are not up for discussion. What is clear though, from seeing the magazine and speaking to the ship's pilots and crew, is that had bombing begun as planned, the operation would not merely have curtailed Iraq's ability to make weapons of mass destruction, but shattered the infrastructure of the Baath party regime sustaining President Saddam Hussein.

"In 91 most of what we dropped on Iraq was 'dumb' technology," said a veteran officer of the Desert Storm campaign. "It was like throwing the whole kitchen sink at Saddam. What we have now is very different: show-case laser-guided weaponry developed over the last seven years with which, if allowed, we could have had a massive impact without even building up serious force levels in the Gulf."

The graffiti was already on the missiles, the missiles on the jets, and the pilots in the cockpits when the operation was called off. So "Spread'em Saddam" and similar optimistic welcomes had to be wiped off and most of the ordinance restored by the specialist crew, the "mag rats", working 120ft below deck.

However hard the US 5th Fleet tries to spread the word that it succeeded in forcing Iraq's hand by the projection rather than implementation of force, the sense of anticlimax for many on the Eisenhower is bitter.

"I was manning my jet, I was ready to go," said a 26-year-old FA18 Hornet pilot, after waiting for "the E ticket ride", the moment his plane



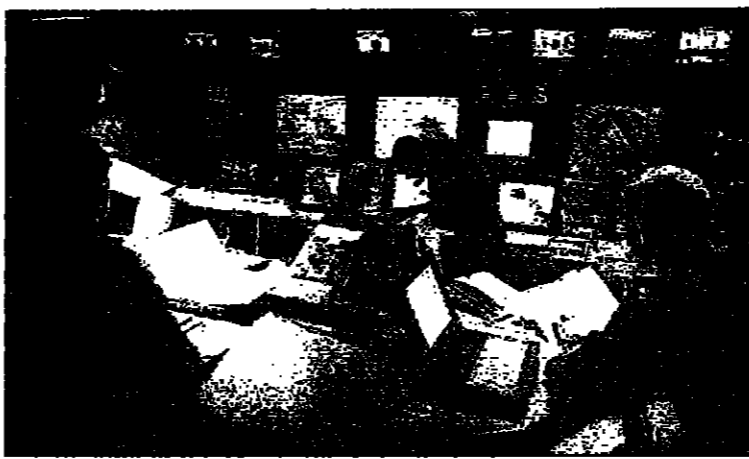
An Eisenhower crewman chalks a message to Saddam on a bomb; below, the carrier's combat direction centre monitors the battle group

screamed off the runway. "We had spent days and nights before this working on our targets. Saddam will only respond to what he knows — violence. I believed in what we were doing and was pumped on adrenaline. Then the captain said, 'Slip the operation 24 hours', and now I'm falling down the backside of that."

Not everyone shares such sentiments. A few veteran aircrew of combat missions against the Iraqis in 1991, particularly those who are married, even voiced feelings of relief. "I didn't want to die" was a difficult statement to argue with.

"I like to stay away from the word disappointment," said Captain Denby Starling II, the Eisenhower's commanding officer, of the operation's abortion. "I can't say I'm disappointed that we didn't launch aviators off this ship into harm's way."

Even so, he must have felt frustration. Four and a half months into a six-month deployment, the time in which a ship's crew is considered to be at its most efficient, it is the second time the Eisenhower has been de-



prived of action on the brink of an impending operation. In the Mediterranean last month, the ship was within 48 hours of launching sorties against Serb targets in Kosovo.

The name of the operation to bomb Iraq stays classified as it remains on 72-hour notice. But the essentials of the plan are known. A wave of Toma-

hawk cruise missiles were to be launched by B52 bombers as well as from ships in the Eisenhower's battle group, targeting air defence locations as well as larger-scale targets.

Then, E2 Hawkeyes, the naval equivalent of Awacs, were to be launched, using their huge circular radars to provide early warning of

Iraqi movements as well as to command and control the subsequent waves of aircraft.

EAGB Prowlers would follow up, each capable of closing down a city's communications, to jam Iraqi radar and electronic data links. Once these were in position, the strike aircraft, FA18 Hornets, would take off to destroy remaining air defences before moving on to specified targets while F14 Tomcats covered them, disposing of any airborne threat.

The plan will soon slip out of the hands of the Eisenhower and into those of the USS Enterprise, already en route to take over command of its battle group of lesser craft.

Few doubt that the crisis will re-emerge soon. "It'll be the Enterprise's good fortune if they get the chance to execute it," said Captain Bud Jewett, commander of the Eisenhower's air wing.

"Someone's going to do it over the next two months. We were ready to do it, and we had all the toys and equipment to make it happen. You can only cry wolf so many times."

Baghdad enemies to rally in London

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NOVEMBER 19 1998  
Sex-change prosecutor settles her legal battle

By FRANCES GIBB  
LEGAL CORRESPONDENT  
A Crown prosecutor who announced that she had lost her job last week has a settlement reached for her legal battle with the Crown Prosecution Service. Barbara Smith, the former Director of Public Prosecutions, had been offered a £100,000 settlement to settle her case. She had been offered a £100,000 settlement to settle her case. She had been offered a £100,000 settlement to settle her case.

enged on  
community

# Baghdad's enemies to rally in London

By MICHAEL BINYON, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

BRITAIN is to call a meeting of 15 Iraqi opposition groups next week to urge them to settle their differences and to spell out what support the West will give them in their efforts to overthrow President Saddam Hussein. But officials made it clear yesterday that Britain would not offer them money or weapons, and was not proposing any timetable of intervention to topple the Iraqi leader. The squabbling leaders will be invited to meet Derek Fitchett, the Foreign Office minister responsible for the Middle East, in London on Monday. The initiative follows calls by Tony Blair and Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, for the overthrow of Saddam and an assertion by the Prime Minister in *The New York Times* yesterday that there was growing opposition to Saddam in Iraq. Mr Blair gave no evidence for his assessment, saying it was something Britain would discuss with America. He was also cautious about not raising false hopes: "We are not issuing promises here that we can't keep." Officials could offer little evidence of any new wave of opposition to Saddam. But they pointed to three areas where disaffection was continuing to draw a harsh response from the Iraqi authorities. In the north, a recent agreement between the two main Kurdish political groups had formed a strengthened front against Baghdad; in the south, there was a continuing insurgency in Basra; and the recent hanging of two Shia Muslims underlined Saddam's fear of religious-based opposition. London is the main centre of Iraqi exiles and opposition groups. But they have become increasingly fractious and disillusioned, and are cynical about Western promises of help. At least three times since the Gulf War, the Iraqi opposition has been encouraged to rise up against Saddam, but the West has never provided money or military support. The groups to be invited to Monday's meeting underline the fragmentation of the opposition, and their mutual suspicion. Their various titles — the Iraqi National Congress, the Iraqi Democratic Party, the Islamic Movement in Iraq, Kurdistan, the Association of Iraqi Democrats, the Assyrian Democratic Movement, the Islamic Accord Party, the Iraqi National Record and the Turkoman National Democratic Movement — indicate the factional and ill-defined aims of many groups. The dissidents include Muslim fundamentalists, Baathists, pro-Syrians, pro-Iranians, communists, monarchists, liberals, democrats and secularists. They are divided ethnically, and religiously: Kurds, Shias, Sunnis, Syrian Christians and Turkomans. They all have very different views of how Iraq should be ruled after Saddam. Diplomats tend to dismiss these exiles because they have little influence over events in Iraq, and some are thought to be compromised either by infiltration by Saddam's agents or by covert association with the regime. The main group, the Iraqi National Congress, was formed in 1992 to combine more than 30 opposition groups, and was led by Ahmad Chalabi, former manager of the collapsed Petra Bank of Jordan. It created a 174-member national assembly, an executive body and a presidential council. But Mr Chalabi was unable to shake off talk about earlier involvement in financial scandal. America has promised some \$100 million (£62 million) to help Iraqi opposition groups.



The heroism of Davy Crockett and his friends was depicted by John Wayne, right, who starred in *The Alamo*

## Diary that dents Alamo legend goes on sale

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN WASHINGTON

THE King of the Wild Frontier returned from beyond the grave to haunt American imaginations yesterday when a dog-eared diary purporting to tell the story of Davy Crockett's final moments at the Alamo went on the auction block. This hinge of Texan history remains so controversial that it was expected to fetch up to half a million dollars. According to legend, Colonel Davy Crockett, of the "coonskin cap, died heroically in San Antonio in 1836, swinging his rifle until Mexican troops slaughtered him among the last half-dozen defenders. Yet the diary of José Enrique de la Peña, a Mexican officer, claims that far from fighting to the death, the Texan and his comrades were taken prisoner and executed. It consists of two handwritten sheaves bound with ragged ribbons. For more than 20 years it has been rejected by Texan loyalists as heresy. As intense interest drove up the auctioneer's estimate yesterday, it was condemned, not for the first time, as a forgery. First published in Mexico City in 1955, it is one of the most complete and valuable accounts of General Antonio de Santa Anna's march north to suppress General Sam Houston's rebel army.

## Starr rehearses for grilling

FROM DAMIAN WHITWORTH IN WASHINGTON



Starr: "pattern of White House obstruction"

PRESIDENT Clinton's tormentor becomes the tormentor today as impeachment hearings open with Kenneth Starr, the independent prosecutor, being grilled by Democrats and a White House lawyer looking for vengeance. With the tables turned, Mr Starr has been rehearsing his testimony and answers to an expected barrage of exorbitant questions, just as Mr Clinton spent hours preparing for his videotaped appearance in front of Mr Starr. Republicans still eager to see Mr Clinton impeached hope Mr Starr can turn in a command performance that will stem haemorrhaging public support for his cause. But if the hugely unpopular prosecutor fails to convince Americans of the validity of his investigation, it will only increase the clamour for the inquiry to be wrapped up. While Mr Clinton's evidence was relayed by closed-circuit television to the grand jury from the White House — and released later on tape — Mr Starr's appearance before the House of Representatives' Judiciary Committee will be televised live. It is being heavily billed by the networks as a critical moment in the Monica Lewinsky scandal. Polls show that about two thirds of Americans view his investigation negatively, but Mr Starr maintains that he is not looking for personal approval. "He does not seek vindication for himself. But he does seek vindication of the facts and the rule of law," said his spokesman, Charles Bakaly. "People who lie and perjure themselves have been able to get away with it by complaining about prosecutors and portraying prosecutors as villains. We believe we have been the victim of a co-ordinated effort to stonewall and destroy our prosecutorial authority." Mr Starr is expected to outline a pattern of White House obstruction extending beyond the Lewinsky affair.

### WORLD IN BRIEF

## Israelis prepare for withdrawal

Jerusalem: Israel began fortifying several Jewish settlements in the occupied West Bank in preparation for the handover of more territory to Palestinian control under the terms of last month's peace agreement at Wye Plantation in the United States (Christopher Walker writes). Israel television showed soldiers constructing cement trenches around a settlement south of Bethlehem which is expected to border Palestinian-controlled land after the next withdrawal. Provided an Israeli Cabinet meeting scheduled for today approves measures by Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, to meet his obligations under the deal, Palestinian officials said the first stage of the pullout could begin as early as tomorrow.

## Freed killer executed

Huntsville: A murderer thought to be the only person to be freed from death row and then to return after killing again was executed by injection for the 1992 abduction, rape and murder of a young woman. Kenneth Allen McDuff, 52, is suspected of killing as many as 14 people here in Texas. McDuff went to death row in 1968 for shooting two teenage boys and raping and strangling a female friend. 16. (AP)

## Singer on the move

Washington: Seven months after being caught in a "lewd act" in a public lavatory in Beverly Hills, George Michael is due to return to California to perform two weeks of community service as part of his sentence (Giles Whinell writes). The pop singer is expected to spend his time travelling around Los Angeles in a van to help to deliver meals to Aids patients for a local charity.

## Gingrich successor

Washington: Republicans unanimously endorsed Bob Livingston, right, to succeed Newt Gingrich, who quit as Speaker of the House of Representatives after elections in which the party's majority over the Democrats shrank from 11 seats to six (Ian Brodie writes). Mr Livingston is seen as a conciliatory figure. Jennifer Dunn, who campaigned to be the first woman House Majority Leader, the number two position, was defeated by Dick Armey.



## Boesak accuser lied

Cape Town: The principal witness behind charges that Allan Boesak, the popular South African anti-apartheid cleric, was guilty of fraud and theft withdrew several of his claims in the High Court. Freddie Steenkamp, Mr Boesak's former bookkeeper, himself jailed for stealing from the churchman's Foundation for Peace and Justice, admitted that he had implicated his boss to cover up his own theft. (AFP)

## Wedding day bonus

Bangkok: A northern Thailand police chief has stopped a hill-tribe bride from jumping from a tower to her death by promising to pay for her wedding, the police said. Lah Zahyo, 18, had said she would jump from the tower after her fiancé told her that he was too poor to provide a dowry and to pay for their planned wedding. (Reuters)

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# The case against cannabis



**Dr Thomas Stuttford reports on marijuana; Harley Street; a flesh-eating bug; Huntington's disease; and the effects of the Spanish diet on longevity**

In 1839, W. B. O'Shaughnessy, a professor of medicine at the University of Calcutta, introduced cannabis into Western medicine. For the past 160 years, until recently, it has been doctors rather than schoolmasters who have had the greater professional interest in the drug. Mixtures derived from cannabis were regularly prescribed until the 1930s and 1940s for a variety of ills. Queen Victoria and her doctor were firm advocates of a cannabis tincture to treat her period pains.

This week Estelle Morris, the School Standards Minister, took the discussion away from a world of white coats to one of mortar boards. In fact, her remarks were not too revolutionary. She was not advocating any laxity in the approach to the misuse of cannabis, merely more flexibility in the punishment system.

Increased acceptance of the medicinal benefits of cannabis, taken in the form of cannabinoid extracts, has tended to obscure the adverse reactions of cannabis smoking. A few years ago, voguish doctors were apt to overrule parental and even educational anxieties and encouraged the cannabis-smoking young person to con-



Spelling out the risks: some doctors advocate the medicinal use of cannabis but it can carry a number of serious ill-effects

tinue. They explained that they could see little difference between the parent having a gin and tonic or half a bottle of wine with dinner and the teenager puffing a joint.

Professor Wayne Hall, in association with Dr Nadia Solowij from the University of New South Wales, has recently reviewed the less desirable effects of cannabis in *The Lancet*.

Most cannabis users stop in their mid to late twenties; few smoke it for more than a few years. In the US and Australia only 10 per cent become daily users of cannabis, although 20 to 30 per cent use the drug weekly. Daily cannabis smokers are more likely to be men,

and tend to be less well educated. They also take tobacco and alcohol regularly as well as a wide variety of other drugs.

Cannabis may induce anxiety and panic in those unused to it. It reduces concentration, impairs memory and muscular co-ordination in the long and short term. This is the price that has to be paid for the euphoria and the intensification of ordinary sensory experiences. The effects on memory and concentration of persistent cannabis use are very subtle. It is not known whether they are reversible after prolonged abstinence but, say the authors, they do create a cannabis-dependent syndrome so that regular users find it ex-

remely difficult to give it up. The acute ill-effects include a liability to accidents, particularly when, as is often the case, the cannabis is combined with other drugs or alcohol.

The capacity of cannabis to increase the risk of psychotic symptoms should, in many doctors' opinion, be enough to discourage its use. It is unlikely that cannabis smoking may "cause" an acute psychotic breakdown but the overwhelming evidence is that it can induce this in those who, because of their lifestyle or their heredity, will be prone to schizophrenia and its related conditions. The temperament

and interests of those who may be in danger of developing mental illness may also draw them to cannabis smoking circles. The continued use of cannabis may not be as obviously mentally destructive as that caused by long-term excessive drinking but the longer the patient has been smoking pot, the greater the impairment. This damage not only affects the person's overall intellectual ability but the subtler aspects of reasoning and decision-making.

Cannabis smokers should realise the physical diseases induced by smoking. They develop chronic bronchitis, just as tobacco smokers do, and their lungs show the changes

that are precursors of malignant disease. There may be an increased risk of cancers of the mouth, pharynx and gullet, and there is evidence that leukaemia is more common among babies born to mothers who smoke cannabis when pregnant.

Professor Hall and Dr Solowij are adamant that those who should avoid cannabis are disturbed adolescents with poor school performance, people with a family history of schizophrenia and its related diseases, patients with asthma, bronchitis, emphysema, those who have already shown a tendency to over-indulge in alcohol or other drugs and, of course, pregnant women.

## Cashing in at Harley St

HARLEY STREET, built in the 1750s, is named after Edward Harley, the 2nd Earl of Oxford. While sometimes dubbed a philanthropist, he is better known as a bibliophile and collector.

The area became the home and workplace of doctors in the 19th century; by the turn of the century 157 were practising in the district. Specialists tended to congregate in Harley Street and smart GPs in Devonshire Place and other neighbouring streets. There are now 1,400 doctors and dentists practising there, and 3,000 ancillary workers.

It is also the home of eight internationally famous private hospitals. Whether Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother has slipped in the stableyard at Sandringham or General Pinochet has slipped a disc in Santiago, they, like many of the world's rich and powerful, go to Harley Street.

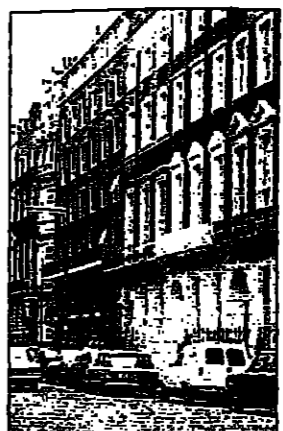
In the London Clinic, for instance, some of the latest gadgetry in the neurosurgical unit includes an optical tracking system, not one designed to direct cruise missiles but the healing knife of a neurosurgeon. The system can also fuse CT scan and MRI images so that the surgeon can, by using virtual reality, pre-plan an operation so as to assess its outcome. In the operating theatre the surgeon is guided by computer along the best route to the diseased area with an accuracy of not less than 2mm.

If Edward Harley were to visit the present tenants, he would be bemused by the advanced state of medical science and technology. How would he, as a philanthropist, judge the street's doctors? Is their practice of medicine motivated by the highest standards of care, or have they a keener eye to the health of their accounts at Coutts Bank in Cavendish Square? Doctors working in the area have rapid access to colleagues recognised around the globe as experts of some particular discipline. Bedside conferences are relatively easy to arrange; I recently saw five consultants at a patient's bedside in the same day. It is reckoned that Har-

ley Street doctors together earn £138 million and that the hospitals have a revenue of £300 million. There are also other private hospitals within easy walking distance that earn a further £60 million, as well as independent laboratories and smaller quasi-medical centres.

Although Edward Harley's heart would have leapt at the great, albeit expensive, medicine being practised at the likes of Princess Grace Hospital or King Edward VII's Hospital, he would have been cast down by the abuse that is inevitable in any industry of this size.

Almost weekly there are



High-tech: Harley Street

stories of disgrace, disaster, subterfuge and downright crookedness perpetrated in the area. In any group of nearly 5,000 ambitious people, there will be those whose greed is greater than their competence or honesty. Recently the landlords, the Howard de Walden Estate, with the ready co-operation of local doctors, formed a Harley Street Bureau. Not everyone, even all the doctors, are aware of the expertise available.

Now overseas and UK corporations, embassies, trade missions, hotels — as well as individuals and their doctors — will be able to use the bureau as an independent point of contact when seeking what, and whom, Harley Street has to offer. It will not offer medical advice, but aims to encourage the best traditions of the area.



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### Child victims you can help

IF, in the 18th century, Edward Harley had dragged himself away from his library and the fashionable West End to the mean streets beyond, he would have come across the pitiable sight of cancrum oris. Often known by its African name of noma, it is a singularly devastating disease that affects the mouth and face of children: a facial form of necrotising fasciitis, the infected "flesh-eating" condition often in the headlines.

Cancrum oris has not been much in evidence in the United Kingdom since the social chaos caused by the First World War. It afflicts children who are undernourished — in particular, those lacking protein — and is often precipitated by measles or other debilitating conditions. It is still occasionally seen in British children who have leukaemia. The cause is a mixture of aerobic and anaerobic organisms that destroy substantial tissue.

Referring to it as noma is appropriate because the disease is still rampant in parts of Africa, where, in most cases, the child dies; the rest are left seriously disfigured. Those who do survive often become social outcasts. A British organisation, Facing Africa (01380-828 533), is co-operating with similar European initiatives to treat the 100,000 African victims aged under six.

### Spaniards raise a glass to long life

IN 1900 a baby born in Spain could expect to live for 35 years. By 1950 its average life expectancy was 62. In 1985 the figure for a female was 80 and 73 for a male. This year the lifespan is likely to be 81.1 and 78.2 years respectively.

Within 50 years, the average Spanish man will live to be 80, and woman to 85. Even during just the past nine years, Spaniards have enjoyed greater longevity, once the road accident rate and deaths associated with drug abuse began to fall. They now have the highest life expectancy in the European Union, and worldwide are second only to Japan.

The *Lancet* has been looking into the reasons why Spaniards are likely to hit their pension funds harder than all their European neighbours. Ramón Segura, of the Uni-



Healthy option: olives

versity of Barcelona, attributes some of this longevity to genetic factors, but he also commends the diet and lifestyle. Spaniards spend much of their time out of doors and relish the antioxidant-rich Mediterranean diet: olives, vegetables, fruit, fish, bread and, of course, wine.

Spain's sun and food both form part of what its people refer to as "mental hygiene", an approach to everyday stresses that aims to minimise an adverse response to tension — a way, perhaps, of coping with the population's mercurial temperaments.

### Highlighting Huntington's

THIS IS Huntington's Disease Awareness Week, and today those most involved in its care are meeting in London to discuss recent research. Lady Harewood, the patron of the Huntington's Disease Association, is hosting the occasion.

The disease is especially prevalent in Norfolk and few who have practised there are unaware of its effects. Each child born of a parent with Huntington's has a 50-50 chance of inheriting it, but the age at which it starts varies between 30 and 50. It causes destruction of the nerve cells in two parts of the brain, the basal ganglia, involved in movement, and the higher centres of the cortex, which control the mind and temperament. The patient gradually suffers physical, emotional and intellectual disability.

Huntington's Disease Association: 0171-223 7000

THE SUNDAY TIMES

# OZONE LAYERS

Check out Chanel's new cruisewear — photographed for The Sunday Times Style by its designer, Karl Lagerfeld, who also reveals his thoughts on fashion, pictures . . . and bad breath. This Sunday

THE SUNDAY TIMES IS THE SUNDAY PAPERS

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# Creating a drama, not a crisis

### Magnus Linklater reports on the art of good education

Estelle Morris was brave and right to say that pupils caught with illegal drugs in school should no longer be automatically expelled. The Minister for School Standards has been attacked for suggesting that head teachers should take a more understanding line with such children. But if "social inclusion" means anything, it must surely start with the youngest of offenders.

A ten-year-old boy found with cannabis in the playground is more than just a criminal statistic, he is an individual social problem. To throw out a teenage girl without exploring the reasons why she had a syringe in her schoolbag is to confirm her as an outcast, and to create a rebel in the making. It is the easier way, but it is far from the most effective.

Last month a seven-year-old boy from Stirling handed to his teacher a bag of heroin, saying it was killing his mother. An 11-year-old in Glasgow was found with £500 of the same drug, though police did not believe he intended to sell it. Some children in secondary schools have been

instruments in their lunch hour. There was a choir, a team playing on African drums, a session on the xylophone, and a rendition of *Lord of the Dance* in which we all joined. I have rarely seen so many teachers smiling.

Outside the assembly room, corridors were festooned with art of every kind. One class had done a sculpture project based on *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, another had transcribed the same play into modern jargon ("Excuse me, Helena, it's not my fault if he don't love you") and there was a fairly sophisticated exercise in transcribing percussion music into written notation.

By now, you may have gathered that the key ingredient here is the use of art, drama and music as a means of drawing the school together. The head teacher, Pat Boyer, has placed them at the core of the school agenda. She has made use of the school's proximity to the South Bank to forge links with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, the Globe, National and Young Vic Theatres, as well as the London International Festival of Theatre. The school's steel band has played at the Royal Festival Hall, and 60 of the pupils have performed at the Olivier Theatre. They composed and played the music for the Globe Theatre's production of *Julius Caesar*, and will put on a winter concert there next month.

Last year they performed in *The Merchant of Venice* at the Globe, learning and acting Shakespeare's actual text. I was introduced to ten-year-old Ilias Elmahoub, from Morocco, who had learning difficulties, but who had nevertheless taken on the role of the Duke of Venice. "He speaks three languages," said Ms Boyer proudly. "English, Arabic, and Shakespeare."

### Throwing out errant pupils confirms them as rebels

It was depressing to see Ms Morris's advice dismissed by some head teachers as "soft"; she had recognised that complex issues do not always respond to simplistic solutions. It was encouraging to find Helen Liddell, Education Minister in Scotland, taking a similar line: "Any health professional or educationist will tell you these children need support, they need help," she said.

Help comes in different forms, but by far the most effective is to make the child feel an important part of the school rather than an outcast. I spent a morning last week in a South London primary school where participation rather than exclusion is the watchword. I was astounded at the results it had achieved. Ten years ago, Dog Kennel Hill School in Southwark was prone to all the usual problems of bullying, truancy and antisocial behaviour that one might have expected in a deprived inner-city area with a mixed race and ethnic background. More than 30 per cent of the children come from homes where English is a second language; over half are eligible for free school meals and a quarter have special educational needs — a recipe, one might think, for trouble.

Yet I watched as 475 of them gathered in obedient rows for school assembly, sitting cross-legged, arms folded, on the floor, totally silent as they listened to their head teacher. On the platform, we were treated to musical performances from different classes who had been studying various

instruments in their lunch hour. There was a choir, a team playing on African drums, a session on the xylophone, and a rendition of *Lord of the Dance* in which we all joined. I have rarely seen so many teachers smiling.

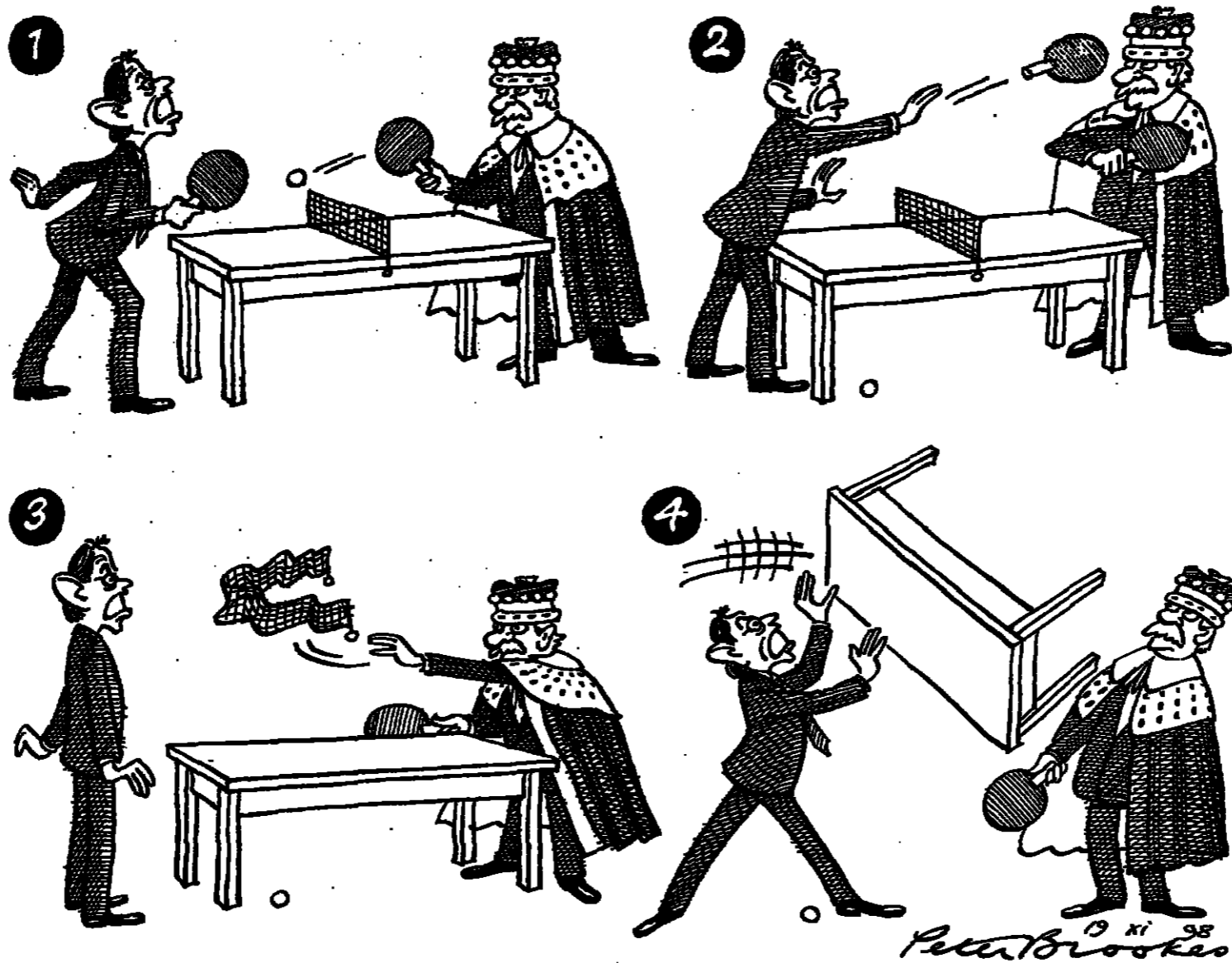
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All this has had a marked impact on academic achievement. The school's last Ofsted report said its standards of English were above the national average and there were no significant differences between ethnic groups. Science, mathematics and history were on or above the national average. And the ethos of the school was singled out for particular praise. The inspectors talked of confidence, moral development, enthusiastic involvement and the pride of its pupils. Against this kind of background, the issue of drugs seems rarely to surface. Ms Boyer believes that excluding any child should be seen only as a last resort. She added that expelling a pupil caught with drugs is merely handing the problem back to the community rather than dealing with it in the school.

There is, however, a more simple lesson to be learnt from places like Dog Kennel Hill: a place where pupils actually want to be has a better chance of coping with drugs than one where expulsion is all too often a welcome alternative.



# Blair's EMU con-trick

### The true political nature of monetary union must now be revealed

Why is there such a gulf between the political culture of Britain and Europe? Why do British politicians continually misunderstand the attitudes of other countries on the future of the European Union? And why is the British political debate on Europe drawn like a magnet to irrelevant or indeterminate economic issues, such as the effects of the single currency on levels of interest rates, unemployment or exports? It should be concentrated on the real issue — the pledge reiterated in Gerhard Schröder's inaugural address last week — "to drive forward the further development of a political union in Europe" after monetary union.

The Europeans take it for granted that monetary union is an essentially political undertaking. The tax harmonisation, co-ordination of social policies and centralised decision-making on economic issues necessitated by a single currency are not just unpleasant by-products of the project, to be hidden from the public and buried as quickly and deeply as possible, a kind of political toxic waste. On the contrary, a "deeper" political union is seen on the Continent as one of the central objectives of the single currency process. Most European politicians and businessmen readily accept that the single currency will make it harder to sustain economic stability in a highly decentralised political setting, with national tax, spending and social policies pulling countries in different directions. But for them this is not a disadvantage of monetary union — it is one of the project's greatest virtues.

Anatole Kaletsky

But even more significant than the betrayal of Britain's economic interests which is inherent in Mr Brown's manifesto is what it says about the inconsistency (or dishonesty) of the Blair Government's approach to European politics. The picture of political events in Europe presented to the British people by the Government is totally at odds with what continental Europeans think is going on. This is an impression that I always form when I talk to politicians and businessmen in Europe. It struck me particularly forcefully last weekend, at a meeting of British and Spanish politicians, businessmen and journalists in Granada.

The proceedings began with a speech by Peter Mandelson, in which the Trade and Industry Secretary stuck loyally to the Government's official policy on monetary union. The Government has determined that there are no "overriding" constitutional issues raised by EMU. Britain wants the single currency to succeed, but will join only when there is "clear and unambiguous" evidence of material benefit, as defined by the economic tests laid out a year ago by the Chancellor. In the following two days of discussions, virtually everyone who spoke demonstrated the utter irrelevance of everything that had been said about EMU by British politicians such as Messrs Mandelson, Blair and Brown. It was as if the British were living on a different planet from the Europeans.

The single currency is deliberately designed to destabilise the European status quo, in which economic policies are determined almost entirely by national governments. Monetary union will inevitably set up a powerful momentum for greater economic and political centralisation — and that was always the plan. This is what French politicians and diplomats mean when they say, as they do at every opportunity, that monetary union will give the EU a welcome "federalist shock". And it is certainly what Oskar Lafontaine, the new German Finance Minister, means when he says that "a common financial and economic policy is necessary in euroland".

For British politicians and businessmen, by contrast, monetary union is not a political issue. The decision to join is simply a matter of economic calculation — a question of whether a point on or off interest rates is worth more or less than some currency flexibility or a bit of extra taxation required to keep inflation at

bay. Some Tory Europhobes do, admittedly, see the single currency as a conspiracy to enslave the freedom-loving yeomanry of England. But even they believe that, in the end, the referendum will be won or lost on economic questions about interest rates and unemployment, not on the political issues of democracy and national sovereignty.

In any case, the Tories also seem convinced that they must emphasise economics, rather than politics, when campaigning against EMU. Otherwise the Government and the Confederation of British Industry can represent them as romantic Little Englanders obsessed with obscure constitutional niceties and oblivious to everyday issues, such as mortgage costs, jobs and interest rates, that motivate British voters and businessmen. Worse still, those who oppose the principle of political centralisation in Europe are accused by Labour politicians and other British advocates of EMU of simply failing to understand what is really going on.

Of course, this accusation may be valid. Someone who is paranoid will, by definition, refuse to admit it — and this accusation could well apply to me. But what strikes me every time I spend a few days with business and political leaders in Europe is how easily this question could be put to the test. Instead of just listening to people such as Gordon Brown or Francis Maude about the Europeans' true political intentions in launching monetary union, perhaps the British people should hear what other Europeans have to say.

John Birt, the Director-General of the BBC, was at the Anglo-Spanish meeting last weekend and it suddenly struck me how easily Britain's political confusion over the single currency could be resolved. Instead of getting Tony Blair or William Hague on television to repeat yet again their totally contradictory claims about the EMU project, why doesn't the BBC ask Gerhard Schröder or Lionel Jospin to explain what vision of the single currency they have in mind? The people of Britain could then decide for themselves whether the single currency is purely a matter of economics or whether monetary union raises any "overriding" constitutional issues.

Of course, all seducers of the masses, potential tyrants or fanatics, have used this argument to make their case: the communists did so when they declared themselves the most enlightened sector of the population and arrogated the right to rule arbitrarily.

The true art of politics is to win people's support for a good cause even when the pursuit of that cause may interfere with their own particular momentary interests. This should happen without impeding any of the many ways in which we can check that the objective is in a good cause, and ensure that trusting people are not led to serve a lie and suffer disaster as a consequence. In some illusory search for future prosperity.

It must be said that there are intellectuals who possess a very special ability for committing this evil. They elevate their intellect above everyone else's, and themselves above all human beings. They tell their fellow citizens that if they do not want to understand the brilliance of the intellectual project offered to them, it is because they are of dull mind, and have not yet risen to the heights inhabited by the proponent of the scheme.

After all that we have gone through in the 20th century, I think it is not very difficult to recognise how dangerous is this intellectual, or rather quasi-intellectual, attitude. Let us remember how many intellectuals helped to create the various modern dictatorships!

A good politician should be able to explain without seeking to seduce. He should humbly look for the truth of this world without claiming to be its professional owner. He should alert people to their own good qualities, including a sense of the values and interests which transcend the personal, without giving himself an air of superiority and imposing anything on his fellow human beings. He should not yield to the dictate of public moods or of the mass media, and yet he should never hinder the constant scrutiny of his actions.

In the realm of such politics, intellectuals should make their presence felt in one of two possible ways. They could — without finding it shameful or demeaning — accept a political office and use that position to do what they deem to be right, not just to hold on to power. Or they could be the ones who hold up a mirror to those in authority, making sure that the latter pursue a good thing and that they do not begin to use fine words as a cloak for evil deeds, as happened to so many intellectuals in politics in the past centuries.

# Where are the Winstons?

### Politics needs more intellectual input, says Vaclav Havel

It is my profound conviction that the world requires, today more than ever, enlightened, thoughtful politicians who are sufficiently bold and broad-minded to consider things that lie beyond the scope of their immediate influence. We need politicians willing and able to rise above their own power interests, or those of their parties or states, who will act in accordance with the fundamental interests of today's humanity. They should behave in the way that everyone ought to behave, even though most may fail to do so.

Never before has politics been so dependent on the fleeting moods of the public or media. Never before have politicians been so impelled to pursue the short-lived and short-sighted. The life of many politicians seems to proceed from the television evening news one night, to the public view in the opinion polls next morning, to their image on television the following evening. I am not sure whether the era of mass media encourages the emergence and growth of politicians of the stature, say, of a Winston Churchill; I rather doubt it, though there can always be exceptions.

The less our era favours politicians who engage in long-term thinking, the more such politicians are needed, and the more intellectuals should be welcomed in politics. Such support could come, among others, from those who never enter politics themselves.

Of course, politicians must be elected and people vote for those who think as they do. If someone wants to make progress in politics, he must pay attention to the general condition of the human mind, he must respect the so-called ordinary voter's point of view. A politician must, like it or not, be a mirror. He dare not be a herald of unpopular truths which, though perhaps in humanity's interest, most voters do not regard as in their interest at the time.

But I am convinced that the purpose of politics is not merely to fulfil short-term wishes. A politician should also seek to win people over to his ideas, however unpopular. For politics must entail convincing voters that there are things which the politician recognises or comprehends better than they do, and that is why they should vote for him. People can thus delegate to a politician certain issues which they do not fully understand themselves or which they do not want to worry about, but which someone has to take up on their behalf.

Of course, all seducers of the masses, potential tyrants or fanatics, have used this argument to make their case: the communists did so when they declared themselves the most enlightened sector of the population and arrogated the right to rule arbitrarily.

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The author is President of the Czech Republic.

# Rebel Mandy

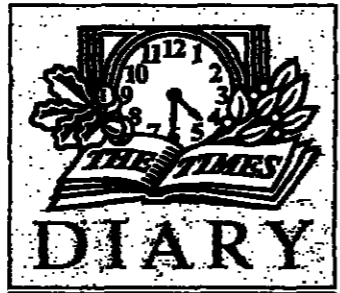
PETER MANDELSON was less of a wow at school than he was on the Copacabana. Mandy's headmaster at Hendon County Grammar, where the short-trousered spinner learnt his craft in the Sixties, didn't take kindly to the young Mandelson's obstinacy.

The head, a Mr Maynard Potts, wrote in his end-of-term report: "I tried to show Mandelson the path to greatness but he chose to ignore it." I asked Mandelson what inspired this stinging appraisal. "I was a bit science-ey," replied the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (on which science has a bearing). "My headmaster tried to persuade me to take chemistry and art O level. I was very confident and I refused. And look where I am now." I try to track down the perceptive Mr Potts, to quiz him on his foresight.

Alas, Mr Potts is no more, and the County Grammar has become Hendon School, a grant-maintained affair. "We have gone through several changes since Mr Mandelson left in 1971," says a chatty voice at the school. "And no other teachers are around from his time and we don't keep records that long." Hmm. Except I

gather Mandelson and Mr Potts had run-ins, including a successful campaign by the young insurgent to abolish prefects. Mr Potts was withering; he branded Mandelson "an industrial militant pulling apart the fabric of our system".

●THE Prince of Wales has found himself strangely drawn to a woman of authority. At the Goffye Museum yesterday, his formidable host, Baroness Brigstocke, former High Mistress of St Paul's Girls' School, was rounding up dignitaries. "I wish I'd been a fly on the wall



at St Paul's," he said admiringly. "to see her technique."

### Sirens alert

SIRENS have been stirring Lord Menzies. The enemy of Muzak is devising an alternative to the "blood-curdling noise" of the dreadful whirring. He argues that the sound "need not convey the emotive state of anguish of those directly involved in the heart attack or fire". He suggests instead the alternating notes of Parisian sirens. As Lord Menzies devises a composition, he tells me that he wants "loud clarinets and trumpets in alternating minor thirds".

●GUESTS at last night's tribute to Vivienne Westwood at the V&A were horrified to find it a smoke-free zone. As the Queen of Punk discovered health, Boy George

cracked first and braved the Arctic conditions outside for a swift puff. Jerry Hall then snapped, "I need a cigarette" and demanded to be shown to a smoking room.

### Hand fisted

BARONESS THATCHER's left hand is swathed in bandages after a recurrence of a nasty little hand affliction. She suffers from Dupuytren's contracture, a condition which bends the little finger into a claw (scar tissue builds up in the palm, pulling fingers inward to a curl). The baroness had to have an operation to correct the problem in her right hand in 1986, forcing her to take it briefly off the



Downing Street tiller, but now it has flared up in her left one. "She has had an operation at the King Edward VII Hospital, and is doing very well," says a junior trooper. If left uncorrected, it leads to deformity, or even amputation. At least she is in good company; she shares the difficulty with David Gower and her old chum Ronald Reagan.

●"WOMEN alert" scream instructions accompanying invitations to Annabel Heseltine's wedding in Bannbury next month. It states that a "top hair stylist", one Lawrence Anthony, has been put on standby for emergency tonsorial therapy. Mr Anthony, Midlands Hairdresser of the Year, no less, pronounces himself "very honoured". "I thought it was helpful," says the sparky Miss Hezza (left). Perhaps Mr Hezza's golden locks might find use for the crimper too.

### Seed of lust

ALAN CLARK has been pondering his fantasy art collection. High on his list: religious paintings. "Cracking girls," he explains, discussing the merits of *The Immaculate Conception* by Murillo. "She is just very attractive and glorious. One could see her anywhere in the constituency, I suppose." Then on to Santa Justa (pictured), who



resembles his charming wife, Jane. "Quite honestly, darling, you do not look like a saint. You want to be but you're not." When I ask what beauty he sees in the human form, he grins: "Original Sin." "I am more moved by nature than icons," says Clark, who is "in discussion" with Father Michael Seed, Roman Catholic convert to the gentry. "I'm not on a production line to convert," he insists. Still, the Pope can cheer up. Clark's grandson was baptised a Catholic recently at Eribold, the MP's Scottish pad.

JASPER GERARD

كنا من الأصل





## TRIPLE OFFENDER

A strange exception to Blair's 'purer than pure' rule

Geoffrey Robinson's one-minute statement to the House of Commons yesterday was an apology for an apology. The Paymaster General may have complied with the letter of the ruling against him by the Select Committee on Standards and Privileges, but the few minimalist sentences that were all he could bring himself to utter in no sense matched the gravity of the occasion.

For a minister to be required to apologise to the House for breaking its rules is almost unheard of: when the rules in question were designed to ensure probity in public life, and the minister is Paymaster General, a contrite and full explanation and apology is the least that could be expected. There was no trace of contrition in Mr Robinson's dismissive performance.

This is the third time in a year that Sir Gordon Downey, the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards, has had cause to investigate Mr Robinson's failures to declare his business interests in the Commons register, as the 1984 rules unambiguously require. First there was his silence over his family's tax-avoiding Orion Trust, based in Guernsey. Although Sir Gordon held that its existence might "reasonably be thought" to influence Mr Robinson — whose ministerial brief includes the tax treatment of savings — and should thus have been declared, he ruled him to have been technically in the clear.

In July, Mr Robinson was found to have failed between 1984 and 1987 to declare his remunerated positions as chairman and director of an engineering company, Swiss EDM/Agie UK; he had also "misunderstood" the need to register his paid directorship of another company, TransTech. Mr Robinson apologised to Sir Gordon for the "oversight" and, although "remunerated directorships" head the list of interests all MPs are required to declare, and the select committee declared him in breach of the rules, it decided that his conduct had not reached "the threshold which would justify the imposition of any

penalty". Although the Prime Minister forwent the hospitality of Mr Robinson's Tuscan villa, he declined to part with him in the summer reshuffle. That decision to put old friendship before the enforcement of his declared doctrine that the conduct of Labour ministers must be "purer than pure", with no rulebreaking tolerated, was a mistake. Now Mr Robinson has been shown to have offended again — not in the remote mid-Eighties, but within this Parliament.

His plea that his omission of his Stenbell shareholding from two successive Commons registers was yet another "oversight" did not satisfy the committee; it should not wash with Tony Blair. Faced with what the committee termed the "cumulative effect" of his conduct, it was extraordinarily lame of the Prime Minister to try to brush the matter off as pertaining to "the time before he was a minister". And not only lame, but less than precise: the dates in question, from February 1996 to October 31, 1997, overlap with his appointment as Paymaster General. During that period, the committee records, "Stenbell acquired a rights issue of 9,805,550 in TransTech from him and sold it to the Orion Trust".

Mr Robinson is not accused of fraudulent or criminal conduct; but he has three been found guilty of a lack of candour. In a Treasury minister, this ranks as a lapse of judgment as clear, though different, as that of the swiftly dispatched Ron Davies. The Prime Minister's own candour has done much to redeem the tarnished reputation of British politics. His choice is clear. If he is content for his Government to be seen as no different from any other, he can continue to overlook his millionaire colleague's seemingly incurable absent-mindedness about his finances. Mr Blair's huge majority will enable him to ride out Tory attacks, though not to still disquiet on his back benches. But if he wants Labour to be seen as different, he should need no prompting as to the right course.

## UNDERGROUND HOLD-UP

Ministers bound and gagged on the Jubilee Line

"London Transport apologises for the delays occurring on the Jubilee Line extension. These are due to bad management, signal failures and the wrong kind of electrician. We hope to resume normal service shortly." So, fervently, do ministers, who know that if the Jubilee Line extension, which will take visitors to the Millennium Dome, is not finished by the year 2000, it will be the worst public relations disaster imaginable.

For once Peter Mandelson, Trade and Industry Secretary, and John Prescott, ultimately responsible for transport, are united in a common cause. Whatever it takes, however much it costs, this project must be completed on time. And it is this obvious desperation that has encouraged workers on the extension to capitalise on the strength of their bargaining position.

Yesterday it emerged that the line had suffered sabotage. Wires have been cut that connect the sprinkler system on two escalators at London Bridge, which had already been completed and approved. The costs of repair around £100,000 and the operation could take a month. The culprits are suspected to be electricians: these are the same workers who are already indulging in wildcat strikes.

Vandalism and intimidation have been common on this project, and sabotage has been going on for several months. Not content with earning more than £1,000 a week — the highest pay in the construction industry — these workers are bent on exploiting their paymasters' determination to have the line built on time.

The whole affair is eerily reminiscent of the 1970s. The production of newspapers

was then routinely sabotaged by printworkers, who knew that they could hold managements to ransom. If a newspaper failed to come out on one day, the company could not simply print twice as many on the next to make up the shortfall. On the flimsiest of pretexts — or none at all — printers would down tools or disrupt the print run. Like today's Jubilee Line electricians, they earned vast sums compared with other skilled manual workers.

The electricians, too, have some peculiarly acute tools of torture for their political masters. The European Working Time Directive, which has just been brought into force by none other than Mr Mandelson, has allowed them to claim even more money for waiving the right to work no more than 48 hours a week. One part of his department is therefore costing the other both money and grief.

And now it is quite likely that Bechtel, the new managers of the Jubilee Line extension, will sack some of these electricians and hire replacements, possibly even from overseas. Mr Mandelson, responsible for trade union rights, will be the man fervently hoping that these men work for far more hours than they are supposed to; or that they are sacked so that their jobs can be taken by foreigners. If there is a picket line, he will — in spirit at least — be on the wrong side of it.

All this is, of course, a salutary lesson for the minister who needs to understand the realities of management and the problems of employers. It is only sad that the forum for such a lesson should be costing the taxpayer £2.85 billion at the latest count — a billion over budget and still rising.

## LESSONS FROM NEWBURY

But this should not be the last bypass built in Britain

The opening of a road that has been mooted for more than 60 years and cost £100 million would until recently have been the occasion for tape-cutting ceremony. Not so the 8.5-mile Newbury bypass, which finally opened this week in conditions of near-secrecy. After more than 1,000 arrests and a noisy tree-squatting protest campaign, the long-delayed project has become a synonym for Britain's changing attitude to roadbuilding.

Even as trees were felled and police dragged protesters from their tunnels, the last Government had already decided that the roadbuilding policy of "predict and provide" was no longer tenable. The Conservatives announced a radical reduction in the programme. Labour went further, cancelling most of the more ambitious road schemes, placing dozens more on hold and asserting that never again would the Highways Agency propose a road so costly or so destructive as the Newbury bypass.

For Labour, desperate to find money for health and education, the swing in public opinion has been a godsend. What in the past would have been condemned can be proclaimed as bold initiatives to save the vanishing countryside. The swing, however, has gone too far. Not all new roads are unnecessary. The people of Newbury will be delighted by their recovered tranquillity. Town as well as

countryside can be ruined by traffic, and local communities should be able to set their priorities. If the protesters at Newbury render all further roadbuilding politically impossible, the sensible regulation of road traffic will become impossible.

The long dominance of policy by the road lobby is in danger of giving way to similar myopia by the anti-road activists. Many seized on a conclusion by the Standing Advisory Committee on Trunk Road Traffic three years ago that new roads simply generate new traffic. In some cases — the M25 most spectacularly — that is true. But towns can do much to defeat such fatalism. Park-and-ride schemes, pedestrianisation and tough planning restrictions can make permanent the respite that a bypass offers. Okehampton did little to calm traffic after its bypass was built and has seen few benefits. Newbury has sensibly announced immediate plans to ban cars from its historic centre to thwart any ideas of using the new bypass as a quick way of driving into town.

The new road has, however, changed the debate. The massive sums spent to resite rare snail colonies and replant trees set a new standard for environmental concern. The road threw into focus the real cost of congestion. It should inhibit any irresponsible future plans to bulldoze the countryside. But it should not be the last bypass built in Britain.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

### Devolution and a weakened Union

From Mr Paul McGuinness

Sir, History informs us that measures designed to placate nationalist movements through the partial satisfaction of their aspirations are more likely to whet appetites for wholesale change. Similarly, it is no coincidence that the mere prospect of devolution foreshadowed the heightened Scottish nationalism of the 1970s and 1990s.

Hence the reasonable and considered charge at the last election that Labour's devolution plans could lead to the fragmentation of our country. To which Tony Blair simply asserted that they would "make the UK stronger".

Eighteen months on, support for the SNP has increased from 22 per cent to 32 per cent. With Labour, they are now becoming each way bets to form an administration in the Scottish parliament.

In fact the SNP's chances will improve with every year. For whatever the configuration of seats in the Scottish parliament, they will be the main beneficiaries in Scotland of the incumbent UK Labour Government's loss of support in "mid term". Mr Blair has created an institution through which an SNP administration could come to pass (possibly it will only need to be a coalition), thereby delivering a *de facto* mandate for Scottish independence.

Perhaps the Prime Minister has yet to grasp the ultimate and all too possible consequence of his devolution programme. But that he should now be launching a political battle of Britain to counter the arguments of a burgeoning SNP (leading article, November 12; report, November 13) does at least suggest recognition of the forces which he has unleashed. Not, of course, that he might ever acknowledge, even with hindsight, that it was his devolution that had given his enemy much of its strength.

Wouldn't it be nice to think that more thought had gone into the rest of Labour's extensive programme for constitutional change?

Yours,  
PAUL MCGUINNESS,  
73 Nightingale Lane, SW12 8LY,  
November 17.

From Dr Ian A. Olson

Sir, Despite what Mary Ann Sieghart (article, November 13) and other alarmist London writers fear, the ungrateful Scots are not rioting in the streets shouting "Down with Blair" and "Death to the Sassenachs".

They are waiting quietly to see if the Government they have helped to elect at long last is in fact socialist (despite actions such as the introduction of fees for higher education); and exactly how the revived Scottish parliament is going to be allowed to operate. Until then.

I remain, yours faithfully,  
IAN A. OLSON,  
20 Burns Road,  
Aberdeen AB15 4NS,  
November 15.

From Dr John McDonald

Sir, Mary Ann Sieghart's view of the relationship between Scotland and England as that between "bolshie adolescents" and their parents may be more insightful than was intended. After all, is not the bolshie teenager phase a pretense to the achievement of independence from the parents, the growth of maturity and self-confidence and, eventually, the development of a healthy relationship with the parents based on mutual respect?

Unfortunately, not all parents know when to let go.

Yours,  
JOHN McDONALD,  
76 Glen Feshie,  
East Kilbride G74 2BH,  
November 15.

From Mr J. E. Humphrey

Sir, Does not Mary Ann Sieghart's denunciation of the Scots apply at most only to a minority? And does not the majority of the English hold the Scots in admiration and respect for their courage, pride, history, customs, law, literature, education, isles, lochs and mountains (not to mention football, golf, tossing the caber and whisky), to the extent that to be surrendered from them would be a grievous loss?

And if the Scots are in doubt about it should we not, for heaven's sake, make that plain?

Yours faithfully,  
J. E. HUMPHREY,  
9 Offington Gardens,  
Worthing, West Sussex BN14 9AT,  
November 13.

From Mr D. M. B. Marquis

Sir, In today's *Times* Gordon Brown devotes many column inches in what appears to be an attempt to cajole the Scots into supporting the Union. Your second leader is in similar vein.

Is it not pertinent to ask of the English what they themselves feel about continuing the Union with Scotland?

Perhaps the answer may not be to the liking of Unionists, Labour or Conservatives.

Yours faithfully,  
D. M. B. MARQUIS,  
New Barn Cottage, New Barn Lane,  
Westerham Hill, Kent TN16 2HT,  
November 12.

### BMA 'working hard' to change culture of medicine

From Dr Peter Hawker

Sir, Your leader ("Open health", November 17) says that health is at least ten years behind education in its openness and accountability. I am not sure how robust the systems are for weeding out incompetent teachers, but I can say that the medical profession is working hard to change the culture of the "old boy network" and come up to the standards of openness and accountability that patients have a right to expect.

Doctors throughout the country will be appalled and repelled at the catalogue of error and negligence which has been exposed in the Ledward case. They do not want to be associated with it in any way and they would not want to believe that they would have condoned similar behaviour in their own hospital.

A fundamental shift has taken place in the culture of medicine and doctors genuinely accept that transparency about professional performance is the right way forward and the only way to retain the trust of patients.

A decade ago, the General Medical Council's advice to doctors warned them that it was improper to disparage the professional skills, or knowledge of a colleague and said that such disparagement could raise the question that they were guilty of serious professional misconduct. Although the guidance went on to tell doctors that they should blow the whistle on colleagues whose fitness to practise was in doubt, the warning against disparagement was uppermost in the doctor's mind.

Today, the guidance is very different. Doctors are told

you must protect patients when you believe that a doctor's or other colleague's health, conduct or performance is a threat to them. Senior hospital doctors have publicly called for more data on the results of treatment so that they can compare the results they achieve with doctors from other parts of the country. The medical profession has given its wholehearted backing to the Government's proposals for the Commission for Health Improvement. But when patient safety is at risk, we cannot rely

on the leisurely pace of four-yearly inspections in the *matter of Obstet*.

The BMA's proposals are more ambitious. We have proposed a system of individual annual appraisal for consultants, with external peer review, so that a senior clinical specialist, with at least the same level of clinical knowledge and experience, will be asked to review the consultant's performance.

The strength of self-reflection is that it allows judgment by those in the best position to pick up poor performance. But it is a privilege, not a right, and the doctors know that they will continue to have that privilege only if patients can be confident that their safety will, in the words of the General Medical Council, "come first at all times".

Yours sincerely,  
PETER HAWKER  
(Chairman, Central Consultants and Specialists Committee),  
British Medical Association,  
Tavistock Square, WC1H 9JP,  
November 17.

### Falklands reply

From Councillor Sharon Halford

Sir, The elected councillors of the Falkland Islands welcomed the visit of the Argentine President to the United Kingdom, and we were interested to read his letter (November 16) offering "mutual peace and co-operation" between the people of his country and the United Kingdom.

At his Lancaster House address President Menem made similar remarks in relation to the Falkland Islands.

We believe that given time and a greater measure of understanding by the Argentine people, peaceful and neighbourly coexistence is achievable in the South Atlantic, based on trust and mutual respect.

From our side this excludes the use of coercion or threat and includes recognition of the historic, cultural and linguistic origins which form the basis of our right to self-determination.

We welcome any efforts by President Menem to create the atmosphere within which we can all live in peace under the government of our choosing — the absolute essence of the democracy which his Government espouses.

Yours faithfully,  
SHARON HALFORD,  
Falkland Islands Legislative Council,  
Stanley, Falkland Islands,  
November 17.

### Birthday Prince

From Mr Quentin R. V. Morris

Sir, Mrs Frances Judd (age 53; one party; letter, November 16) cannot understand why Prince Charles should need more than one 50th birthday celebration. I can offer her one very good reason, which is that more parties and banquets, etc. enable more of the people to join in the celebrations.

The Prince of Wales himself might well have preferred to mark this special anniversary in a much less lavish and heavily publicised manner, but even for a "people's Prince", noblesse oblige.

Yours faithfully,  
QUENTIN R. V. MORRIS  
(Age 52; one party),  
110 Eton Rise,  
Eton College Road, NW3 2DD,  
November 16.

### Judging MPs

From Mr James Wild

Sir, Sir Gordon Downey's comment (report, November 13) that when new bribery and corruption laws were introduced, any MPs facing charges should be dealt with by the courts and not by Parliament, must be welcomed on at least two counts.

First, it would afford the accused the right to cross-examine their accusers, a right denied in the Neil Hamilton affair. Secondly, an impartial jury, rather than fellow politicians who may be swayed by partisan considerations, would reach judgment.

Removing judicial matters from the political arena is surely desirable and may go some way to restoring public confidence in its representatives.

Yours faithfully,  
JAMES WILD,  
88 Ruskington Drive,  
Wigston Fields, Leicester LE18 1LA,  
wild@ecromwell-tools.co.uk  
November 13.

### New depths?

From Mr Alan McLoughlin

Sir, I thought that the phrase "to die for" was in an unassailable position as the most irritatingly silly expression of the decade. Now, however, I believe that the description of almost anything which is currently in vogue as "sexy" has cruised into the lead. The PM's use of the word to describe economic stability (report, November 17) clinched it for me.

Yours faithfully,  
ALAN MCGLOUGHLIN,  
Wheat Lovell Farm, Manhay,  
Helston, Cornwall TR13 0NL,  
almac@btinternet.com  
November 17.

### Russia's crisis

From the Director of the British Russian Hospice Society

Sir, Your report on the Russian food crisis (November 10) tells of yet more misery faced by the people of Russia.

This society has just undertaken a survey of hospices there, the results of which show an appalling absence of medicines, dressings and medical equipment. The situation, never good, has deteriorated this year. There are no drugs for patients suffering from the awful pain and other distressing symptoms of advanced cancer, open wounds cannot be properly cared for and even simple cleanliness is compromised by a lack of soap.

The story of human distress is one which is unimaginable to us in the West and is compounded by sinking morale amongst the Russian doctors and nurses, many of whom have not been paid for several months.

The Russian authorities do not make it easy for agencies such as ourselves to help. Russian customs and bureaucracy make aid imports notoriously difficult (letter, October 8), but we must endeavour to assist these people in every way open to us.

Yours faithfully,  
WENDY JONES,  
Director,  
British Russian Hospice Society,  
High House, Great Waltham,  
Chelmsford, Essex CM3 1EL,  
November 11.

From Mr Chris Smith

Sir, Your report (November 16) on the Prince of Wales's 50th birthday party at Highgrove might have been better titled "A night for jewels, but not for common sense".

Your photographer has inadvertently recorded a number of the so-called great and good breaking the law on the way to the party.

I count two princesses, a duchess, a minister of the Crown and a possible future Queen declining to follow the law of the land and wear a seatbelt.

If the Royal Family learnt nothing else from the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, they should have learnt to belt up.

Yours faithfully,  
CHRIS SMITH,  
54 Fairfield Drive,  
Dorking, Surrey RH4 1JH,  
November 16.

### Spirited response

From Mrs Geraldine Hamilton

Sir, Today's *Times* presented me with an agonising dilemma — to go for £2 off *The Fourth Times Book of Best Sermons*, or secure the vital coupon towards VAT-free Christmas booze situated exactly on the reverse of the page.

Aunt to one clergyman and widow of another, my scissors hesitated only for seconds — I went for the booze as possibly being more uplifting to the spirits in the long run.

Yours sincerely,  
GERALDINE HAMILTON,  
West House, Charlton,  
Chichester, West Sussex PO18 0HU,  
November 11.

### A question of breeding

From Mr Robert J. FitzGerald

Sir, I never gave too much credence to some of the more arcane global warming theories, but now I'm not so sure. The project director for the new Newbury by-pass reports: "The snakes are apparently very happy and the snails are breeding like rabbits" (report, November 16).

If this is indeed the case (and who can doubt him) what, pray, are the rabbits doing?

I remain, Sir,  
your worried servant,  
R. J. FITZGERALD,  
17 Hartswood Road,  
Stamford Brook, W12 9NE,  
November 17.

Business letters, page 33

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 0171-782 5046. e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk

### Anna Akhmatova

From Mr Robert J. Waterhouse

Sir, In his article about Anna Akhmatova and Isaiah Berlin, "The day a sexual ingénue met Russia's fabled seductress" (November 10), Michael Ignatieff states that Akhmatova's work was banned in Russia from 1925 to 1945. The reality is rather more complex.

In February 1930, puzzled by her absence at a literary event, Stalin personally gave her permission to publish again. In 1940 her new edition, *From Six Books*, was published and 10,000 copies were printed. It was suggested that the work be nominated for a Stalin Prize. The ban on her work was then reimposed that autumn, by which time the edition was sold out.

In September 1941 Akhmatova spoke on the radio to the women of Leningrad, correctly predicting that her city could not be conquered. She was evacuated to Tashkent the following month and her *Selected Poems* were published there in 1943.

A new ban was imposed on her work in the autumn of 1946, preventing two new collections being published. This was lifted in 1958, five years after Stalin's death.

Yours sincerely,  
ROBERT J. WATERHOUSE,  
5 Hebertbank,  
Chishurst, Kent BR7 5RE,  
November 11.

From Sir John Lawrence

Sir, I don't know where Michael Ignatieff got his notion that Isaiah Berlin and Anna Akhmatova never touched each other during his celebrated meeting with the poetess, but he told me that they slept together and he added that "She was sixty".

Yours sincerely,  
JOHN LAWRENCE,  
Appy Home,  
367 Banbury Road,  
Oxford OX2 7PL,  
November 10.

### Tubby Christmastime

From Mr Neil Moore

Sir, Mrs Brian Barker seeks advice from more sophisticated minds for an explanation of the religious significance of Teletubby Advent calendars (letter, November 9; see also letters, November 12).

I offer, with less sophistication, that 10-month-old children find the choicest shapes much easier to grasp than the abstract nature and complexity of the religious debate: a situation likely to last at least until they have outgrown Teletubbies.

I am, Sir,  
NEIL MOORE,  
The Firs,  
Heybridge Drive,  
Barkingside, Essex IG6 1PE,  
November 18.

From Mr Peter Gilbert

Sir, I would have considered the Teletubbies Advent calendar very mild compared with the Power Rangers Advent calendar for sale in our local stationers.

I could not easily reconcile the image of a blazing weapon with the traditional theme of Advent.

Would I get any help from Revelation?

Yours sincerely,  
PETER GILBERT,  
81 Bradbourne Park Road,  
Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 3LQ,  
November 12.

From Dr Clare Heath

Sir, My two-year-old nephew may already have found the link between Teletubbies and Christmas.

Last year, when asked to name the characters in a nativity crib in church, he exclaimed: "Oh there's Joseph and Mary and a baby Teletubby."

Yours faithfully,  
CLARE HEATH  
(Chairman,  
Keep Christmas in  
December Society),  
131 Elgin Crescent,  
London W11 2JH,  
November 18.







OBITUARIES

JACQUES MEDECIN

Jacques Médécine, Mayor of Nice, 1965-90, died in Uruguay on November 17 aged 70. He was born in Nice on May 5, 1928.



Jacques Médécine with his wife Ilene, right, and two friends on the town in Nice, 1990: shortly afterwards he resigned as mayor and fled to Uruguay

Debonair, dynamic and corrupt, Jacques Médécine was the most scandalous French mayor of modern times, yet also in some ways one of the best. He took on a torpid, decaying resort city, living on his past, and through bold investment projects and skilful management he turned it into a booming, youthful business-cum-tourist metropolis, again the queen of the Riviera. For this he was idolised locally, and the Government even made him junior minister for tourism in 1976-78.

But he piled up huge municipal debts. And when the tax and judicial authorities unearthed a bizarre morass of financial misdealings, in 1990 Médécine suddenly resigned and fled to Uruguay. He was convicted in absentia and sentenced to a year in prison, for misuse of 13 million francs of public funds. Then finally he was extradited back to France in November 1994, to face trial on charges of massive fraud, bribe-taking and tax evasion.

Médécine's career spotlighted a weakness in French local government. Though in many ways centralised, the French system does allow a great deal of power to a city mayor, who can become a potent local autocrat. Many of them work wonders for their cities. But they can also work wonders while abusing the system, and for a long time getting away with it unchecked.

The Médécine phenomenon

also said a lot about the mentality and mores of Europe's largest coastal resort. "In France," it is said, "there's Paris, there's the provinces — and there's Nice," so very Italian, a kind of city-state that Médécine ruled as a private fief where the writ of Paris scarcely ran. "Le Grand Jaquou" was a true Nîçois, flamboyant, outspoken, charismatic, with a young blonde American wife and a fast, glamorous life-style.

He ran the city through the notorious système Médécine, a tight network of patronage and cronyism that extended also through all the Alpes-

Mariannes department, of whose council he became president. This system was not unusual in a Mediterranean town. But Médécine was also openly friendly, at one time, with some of the local high-class gangsters. Yet he remained popular, handsomely re-elected four times.

He "inherited" Nice from his father, "le roi Jean", Mayor from 1928 to 1965. A Pétainist who then switched to the Resistance (thus keeping his post after the war), Médécine père later backed Algérie française, welcoming to Nice the tens of thousands of resettlers who formed the core

of the city's large ultra-right faction. Born in Nice, Jacques Médécine studied law in Paris, worked as a journalist, then became Mayor on his father's death in 1965, and an independent, right-wing member of the Assembly.

Those were boom French years, and Médécine set about revitalising the city. He and his team built Akropolis, a lavish business centre; they enlarged the airport, making it the busiest outside Paris; they cleared up beach pollution, created urban expressways, renovated the lovely Vieille Ville and the Place

Masséna, rebuilt the opera house; founded the Musée Chagall poured money into culture. Médécine encouraged new industries and high-rise properties, scarring the landscape of the lower Var plain. But his policies did bring younger, active people to a town of retired pensioners, as well as that vital commodity, all-year business and convention tourism. Nice also became extremely clean and tidy.

But it still kept its powerful Mafia-like criminal milieu, and although Médécine was not a part of it, he felt the need to have links with it. In the

1970s his friends included Albert Spaggiari, charged with a huge bank robbery, and Dominique Fratoni, implicated in the corruption case of the Ruhl Casino. It was the milieu of which Graham Greene, living at Antibes, wrote in *J'Accuse*: "Avoid the region of Nice — the reserve of some of the most criminal organisations in the South of France." Greene also spoke of "the connivance of high authorities".

For these links, Médécine was dismissed as tourist minister by President Giscard d'Estaing. His party political affiliations were always oddly

erratic, first centrist (UDF), then neo-Gaullist (RPR), though he hated Gaullism. Finally, in the 1980s, when the main parties had rejected him, he began to flirt closely with the National Front, very strong in Nice. Declaring that he shared their views "99.9 per cent", he made anti-Semitic outbursts that angered local Jews, and declared his support for apartheid and for the Pinochet regime in Chile.

The secret of his long success in Nice was his patronage system, based on a web of local associations with some 15,000 members, secretly centered on the Mairie, which gave and received pay-offs. Médécine could thus infiltrate his loyalists into most key positions, and could find the financing for his projects. But in the 1980s the city was piling up huge debts, reaching 600 million francs in some years. The fiscal authorities became suspicious. Médécine himself had managed to pay no income tax since 1980, and it was thought that he had been laundering the city's turnover to enrich himself.

As long as the Right was in power in Paris, investigations were blocked: Jacques Chirac and some others had been friendly with Médécine, and they did not want embarrassing revelations. But when the Socialists returned in 1988, they sent special tax experts to Nice who uncovered much evidence. This involved underhand deals to re-finance the city's debt, and other deals such as selling public lavatories to California, where Médécine had some dubious business interests. (He also acquired an American wife, Ilene, whom he passed off in France as a Max Factor

heir, whereas in fact she was rather poor.)

In September 1990, facing a claim for back payment of 20 million francs, plus criminal prosecution for misuse of funds, Médécine resigned, blaming "a plot by the totalitarian Socialist power machine". By a prearranged plan he flew to Uruguay, which had no extradition treaty with France. There at Punta del Este he started a business selling T-shirts, and blithely continued to manipulate Nice politics by remote control, giving interviews to visiting French television reporters. His son-in-law, a travel agent, organised package tours to Uruguay including *trois jours de fête* with Médécine. But the party ended when in 1994 Paris finally persuaded Uruguay's Government to extradite him. He was sentenced to three-and-a-half years in prison, reduced to two years on appeal.

His "system" in Nice collapsed in confusion. Many Nîçois were by now sickened by him, but others kept a certain nostalgia. According to one opinion poll in 1993, hard to believe, when the cheeky exile threatened to stand for President of France, 86 per cent of Nîçois said they would vote for him.

His strident city patriotism went some way to explain the local cult for this tall, moustachioed braggart with the big handshake and breezy southern manner, fond of girls and parties, and an excellent cook (his own book on *la cuisine nîçoise* was a bestseller).

Médécine, who returned to Uruguay after serving his sentence in France, is survived by his second wife, Ilene, and the two daughters of his first marriage.

DOUG WRIGHT

Doug Wright, Kent and England bowler, died on November 13 aged 84. He was born on August 21, 1914.

JUST before and after the Second World War Doug Wright was probably the most feared of English bowlers. This is not proclaimed by his record, either for Kent or for England, but on his day he could reduce to impotence the finest batsmen in the world. He was out of the ordinary run of bowlers, being a leg-spinner of almost medium pace, a fact which reduced his control and increased his capacity. Wright possessed a well-disguised googly, and a calm, philosophical temperament with which to ride the misfortunes he encountered.

Born in Sidcup, Douglas Victor Percy Wright had to wait until A. P. Freeman's retirement at the end of the 1936 season before establishing himself with Kent. In 1937, his first full season, he took 107 wickets and the news soon spread that a bowler had emerged who might become a matchwinner for England. Sir Pelham Warner, on watching him at Maidstone in 1939, said that from a distance he had not seen more difficult bowling since the days of S. F. Barnes. And yet to put him on to bowl was always something of a gamble. He was prone to bowl no-balls, and long hops were part of his stock-in-trade.

Wright's first appearance for England was against Australia at Trent Bridge in 1938, a series that set the pattern of his Test career. At Leeds in the fourth Test match he brought visions of a remarkable English victory when Australia were set 107 to win in their



Wright bowling at a Test trial between England and the Rest at Birmingham in 1948

second innings. Coming on at 48 for two he quickly sent back Bradman and McCabe and later had Hassett caught — before Australia got home. In the other Tests he was more

costly and less successful. Wright spent the Second World War in the Army. With the return of peace he was back at once in the England side and for the next ten years

he was Kent's leading wicket-taker. In Australia in 1946-47 he took 23 wickets in the Test matches and the Australians were unanimous in their praise of his bowling.

Yet, as a general rule, Wright's achievements never quite matched his ability. As he was a leg spinner, his slip fielders would stand fairly close to the wicket, and the ball would go flashing past them at catching height. Frequently, too, he would shave the stumps with a leg break or a googly, and have his next ball, a long hop, hit for four. The catches dropped off his bowling were legion.

Bowling, indeed, brought Wright more than his share of frustration and more than his share of success. He did the hat-trick seven times, more than anyone else in the game's history. Ten times he took 100 wickets in a season. In 1954 he became Kent's first professional captain, an appointment he held for three years. For England he took 108 wickets at 39.11 apiece. All told he took 2,056 wickets.

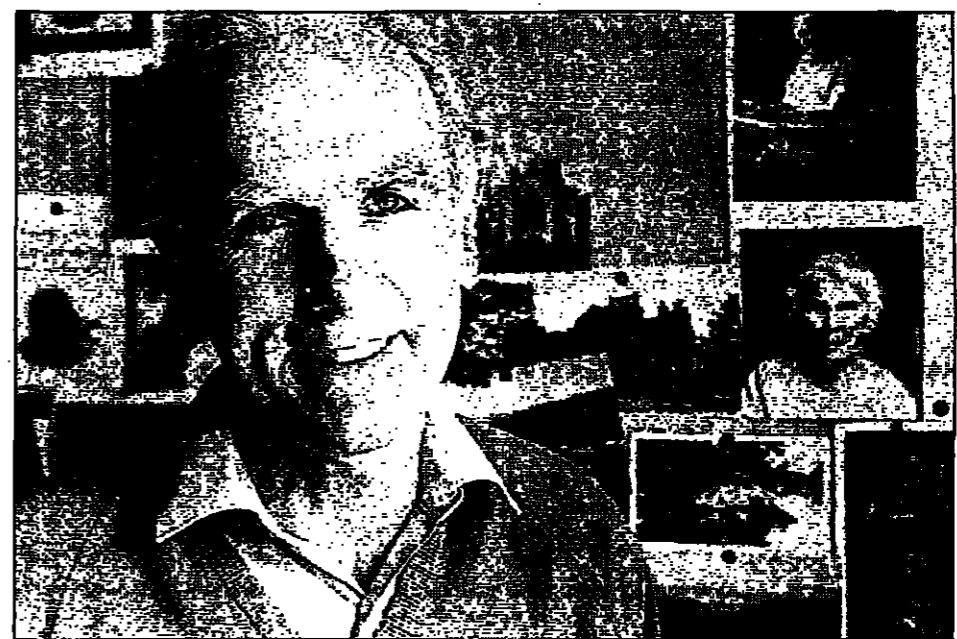
By those who watched him in action he will be remembered for his long, bouncing run. By those who played against him he was known for his gentle nature and his legendary potential. And by all who came into contact with him he was recognised as a model among professional cricketers.

Wright retired after 25 years with his county at the age of 44, and in 1959 he succeeded George Geary as cricket coach at Charterhouse, a job he held until his final retirement in 1971.

His wife Daphne survives him, together with their son and daughter.

PROFESSOR TOM KITWOOD

Professor Tom Kitwood, dementia expert, died from a previously undetected heart defect on November 1 aged 61. He was born on February 16, 1937.



Kitwood: put the person, not the disease, at the centre of dementia care

THE unexpected death of Professor Tom Kitwood, a leader in the understanding of dementia and in the care of those affected by it, came at a wastefully early age. He turned to the subject relatively late, but he brought to it both wisdom and an ability to turn his research insights and those of others into accessible lessons for a wide audience.

However, he lived long enough to see his contribution widely acknowledged in recent weeks: by his appointment to a personal chair of psychogerontology at the University of Bradford, and by Age Concern's Book of the Year award for his last book, *Dementia Reconsidered*.

Thomas Marris Kitwood was born in Lincolnshire. The son of a businessman, he was educated at Rugby, where he was a scholar, and at King's College, Cambridge, where in 1960 he took a good degree in natural sciences. He was a committed Christian, and he trained for the ministry at Wycliffe Hall, being ordained in 1962.

From there he went on to teach at Sherborne, where he was priested. At Sherborne he at first propounded Christianity and chemistry in untroubled double harness. But he soon began to ask questions about his Christianity. In particular, he started to explore the insights of humanism, which he brought to much of his later work, and in his first book, *What is Humanism?*, he examined material and religious approaches to the question.

From Sherborne he went to Uganda, to teach at Busoga boys' boarding school in the hills above Lake Victoria. There he met Jenny Cooper, herself the daughter of missionary parents, whom he married in 1969. He also encountered the exciting challenges of a young continent, and, when

Idi Amin took power, its dangers. He was instrumental in rescuing his Ugandan headmaster from Amin's tribal brutality, after which, recognising the impossibility of remaining under Amin's terror, he returned to Britain.

Troubled in his Christianity, Kitwood wanted to broaden his academic interests and to break into the fields of psychology and sociology. He was in his late thirties, but he took his young family to the University of Bradford, where in 1974, after three hard years on a student grant, he took an MSc in the sociology of education, following it with a PhD in social psychology. In the process he substituted a concerned humanism for the Christianity of his youth. (He had already relinquished his Orders.)

Kitwood stayed on at Bradford to lecture on a range of sociological and scientific subjects. Equipped as he was in both natural and social sciences, he was also well placed to pursue his interests in counselling, psychotherapy and depth psychology. But it was almost another decade before he came to the field — dementia — in which he made his name.

In 1985 consultants at the Bradford Health Authority turned to him for academic support and research supervision for their work in this field. He quickly began to create an original approach to the understanding of dementia, which took both neuroscience and social psychology into account.

He also brought a degree of hope, almost of optimism, to the subject. The details of dementia care had hitherto been left largely unexamined, and a pessimistic view of the affliction prevailed. Kitwood was one of a small group of pioneers who created a new social psychology of dementia. It incorporated biomedical considerations, but went beyond this to include factors related to personality, life history and social interaction, putting the person, not the disease, at the centre of dementia care.

Kitwood saw Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia as human problems. Too often sufferers were treated as a group rather than as individuals, their humanity neglected. The "new culture" of dementia care owes everything to the pioneering work of the Bradford Dementia Group which he led. His "dementia

care mapping" technique, a tool for the measurement of benevolent care, is now widely used in nursing and residential homes.

Kitwood contributed three books to the growing literature of dementia. *Concern for Others* explores the psychological basis for an ethic of care. *Person to Person: A Guide to the Care of those with Failing Mental Powers* (written with Kathleen Bredin) is a textbook of good practice. *And Dementia Reconsidered* examines the interplay of neurological and socio-psychological factors in dementia.

But Kitwood's personality made as great a contribution to his work as did his knowledge. He could be edgy at times, but he worked, lived and spoke with a commitment and enthusiasm about the study and alleviation of dementia. He brought to every presentation something of the missionary intensity that had driven his Christianity. He was a strong supporter of organisations such as Age Concern and the Alzheimer's Disease Society.

Tom Kitwood was divorced in 1986. He is survived by his son and daughter.

PERSONAL COLUMN

A collection of small advertisements including 'SERVICES', 'TICKETS FOR SALE', 'FOR SALE', 'FLATSHARE', 'FLIGHTS DIRECTORY', 'ANNOUNCEMENTS', 'COURT & SOCIAL', and 'ALL TICKETS'.

Advertisements for 'DENTISTRY OR BEAUTY CULTURE?' and 'ON THIS DAY November 19, 1929', featuring a story about a dentist and a hairdresser.







THE TIMES

INSIDE SECTION 2 TODAY



BUSINESS Communication software targets the big spenders PAGE 35



ARTS Jarvis Cocker and Pulp hit the road running PAGES 40-43



SPORT Burns driven by desire to overtake McRae PAGES 48-56

TELEVISION AND RADIO Pages 54, 55

BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 19 1998

Safeway braces itself for tough trading

BY SARAH CUNNINGHAM RETAIL CORRESPONDENT

SAFeway, the supermarket group, has reported sharply lower first-half profits and said that this Christmas may be the toughest in years for food retailers.

Colin Smith, chief executive, said: "We expect the important Christmas trading period to be more challenging for the sector this year than for many years and the strength of our anticipated second-half profit recovery will depend upon the industry trading conditions which prevail within the coming months."

In the six months to October 10, pre-tax profits fell from £228.3 million to £187.4 million on sales up 8 per cent to £4.27 billion. The fall came as a result of investments in offering triple loyalty card points on some purchases, in increasing staffing and in improving fresh food availability.

The company, which is the fourth-largest supermarket chain and hit serious supply chain problems 12 months ago, said that like-for-like sales were 4.9 per cent ahead in the first five weeks of the current year, after rising 4.7 per cent in the first half. Mr Smith said: "The important thing is that we turned around from trading behind the sector to trading ahead."

The aim is to keep up 4.7 per cent like-for-like growth in the next two years. Mr Smith said that this was "realistic but challenging". Earnings per share fell from 14.9p to 12.3p. There is an unchanged interim dividend of 4.4p. The shares rose 14p to 290p.

Commentary, page 34



British Aerospace and Saab will share the revenues and the workload from the deal to manufacture the Gripen aircraft, pictured over Cape Town

BaE and Saab in £1.5bn South African jet deal

BY ADAM JONES AND RAY KENNEDY IN JOHANNESBURG

BRITISH AEROSPACE and Saab, the Swedish group in which it has a 35 per cent stake, were among the biggest winners yesterday as South Africa unveiled an arms-buying programme worth more than £3 billion.

BaE and Saab are preferred suppliers for a military aircraft deal that could be worth more than £1.5 billion.

However, the achievement was clouded by fears that BaE is to close an armaments factory at Bishopston, near Glasgow, with the possible loss of 300 jobs, and an admission

that BaE is still waiting for hundreds of millions of pounds due from Saudi Arabia.

BaE shares rose from 465p to 474 1/2p. BaE and Saab are now negotiating for a final contract to supply 24 Hawk trainers and 28 Gripen fighters.

However, it seems certain that BaE's Royal Ordnance subsidiary is to lose out on a vital contract to supply gun propellant to the Ministry of Defence. It is widely assumed that Denel of South Africa has won the order. BaE is in last-ditch talks with the MoD to try to get at least some of the work subcontracted to Bishopston. Defence unions, including the TGWU, yesterday urged Labour ministers not to let the plant close.

BaE also admitted yesterday that it has still not received hundreds of millions of pounds outstanding from Saudi Arabia under the Al Yamamah arms deal. The money is to compensate BaE for a fall in the market value of oil it receives as payment under Al Yamamah. The debt hit BaE's interim results and share price in September, even though it said it was confident of getting the money soon. A BaE spokesman said: "We remain as confident as we were."

Other winners in the South African programme include GKN's Westland subsidiary, which was also named as a preferred supplier. It will sell four Super Lynx maritime helicopters in a deal likely to be worth £80 million. Losers include UK shipbuilders, such as GEC and Vosper Thornycroft, said one analyst. German firms have been chosen to build corvette patrol boats and submarines.

South Africa also postponed a decision on any requirement it might have for main battle tanks. This order could be crucial to Vickers. The manufacture of the Gripen will be split between Saab and BaE. Some work may go to South African industry. The basic agreement between Saab and BaE is to take approximately half the work and revenues each. South Africa will be the first export customer for the Gripen. The country's arms-

buying programme is designed to make it the policeman of sub-Saharan Africa. It hopes to win foreign investment and counter-trade deals worth as much as £10 billion in return, creating at least 15,000 jobs. There has been a suggestion that BaE may take a stake in Denel, which is state-owned. The arms purchases were opposed by Trevor Manuel, the Finance Minister, who is concerned about the effects on South Africa's international borrowing as well as on budget deficit targets. The defence share of the budget has been cut during the past four years to 1.8 per cent of gross domestic product compared with 5.3 per cent in the apartheid years.

Glaxo has cure for Zantac patent headache

BY PAUL DURMAN

GLAXO WELLCOME has overcome the demise of Zantac, its ulcer drug, and is showing an increase in underlying sales once again. But growth in migraine drug sales have disappointed expectations, and the HIV market has also slowed.

The pharmaceuticals company said it remained on track to meet its performance targets. It has previously said that, leaving aside the impact of currency fluctuations, it expects to maintain earnings this year.

Yesterday it said: "If exchange rates were to remain at October 31 levels for the rest of 1998, the earnings for the year as a whole would be adversely affected by some 6 per cent relative to 1997." Glaxo Wellcome's sales for the first ten months of the year were £6.4 billion, a 1 per cent rise at constant exchange rates, but a 4 per cent fall when reported in sterling.

The company's first-half results were badly hit by the collapse in sales of Zantac, which last year lost its US patent protection and became vulnerable to unbranded competition. Excluding Zantac, Glaxo Wellcome said its underlying sales are growing at 11 per cent, and at 14 per cent in the US.

With the blockbuster migraine and the newer Amegrel/Naramig, migraine drugs are one of Glaxo Wellcome's most important markets. The growth of Lamictal for epilepsy and Wellbutrin for depression enabled the central nervous system portfolio to perform well overall. Sales of asthma drugs led by Flutotide and Serevent continued to grow strongly.

Glaxo Wellcome hopes the launch of two new HIV drugs will revive growth in an area where prospects have been dulled by the slowing rise in the number of AIDS cases in the developed world.

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES table with columns for FTSE 100, FTSE All Share, Nikkei, Dow Jones, S&P Composite and US RATE.

LONDON MONEY table with columns for 3-month interbank, 6-month interbank, 12-month interbank, and 3-month bill.

STERLING table with columns for New York, London, DM, FF, SF, Yen, and £ index.

DOLLAR table with columns for London, DM, FF, SF, Yen, and \$ index.

YEN table with columns for London, DM, FF, SF, Yen, and ¥ index.

MONTHLY SECTOR table with columns for Brant 15-day (Feb), and London close.

Other market data including Brant 15-day (Feb) and London close.

\* denotes midday trading prices

Abbey deal

Abbey National showed its faith in UK consumers' continuing hunger for credit when it bought a trio of businesses trading under the Lombard banner from NatWest for £247 million. Page 30

Water fears

Hyder, the Welsh multi-utility, warned a pricing crackdown by the water industry regulator will return the industry to "the bad old days of the public sector." Page 31, Tempus 32

High street sales figures revive hopes of rate cut

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY, ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

HIGH street sales growth slipped to its lowest level in nearly three years, raising fresh hopes that the Bank of England will cut rates again as early as next month. Retail sales volumes slumped by 0.4 per cent between September and October while the annual rate of growth dropped to 1 per cent - the lowest level since January 1996.

The City also seized upon the revelation that Willem Buiter, once regarded as one of the most hawkish members of the Monetary Policy Committee, had advocated a 0.75 per cent reduction in rates at the last MPC meeting as evidence that further rate cuts loom.

The unexpectedly weak retail sales left economists warning that retailers could be facing significant stock overhangs after a dismal Christmas. Although the Office for National Statistics said the

poor October weather could partly explain the poor figures, the less volatile quarterly measure of growth also fell to its lowest level in three years. Sales of household goods were hardest hit falling 1.5 per cent during the month while textile, clothing and footwear sales also slipped 0.3 per cent. Economists gave warning that retailers in these sectors now

seemed unable to improve sales despite heavy discounting.

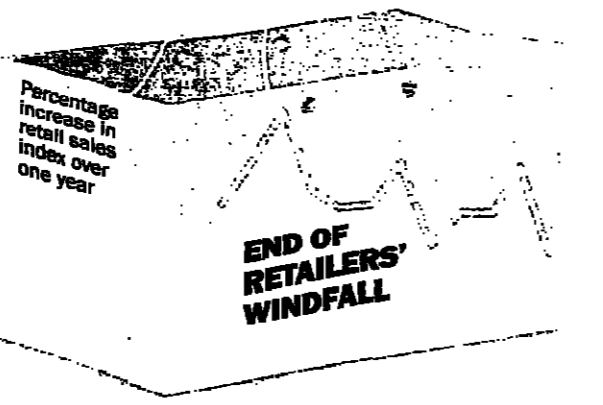
The minutes of the November MPC meeting, which were also published yesterday, confirmed that the committee was in complete support of the half-point cut and that a number of members want to see rates fall again soon. "It was more likely than not

that further cuts would at some point be needed, but the lags in the economy meant that it was not optimal to make those cuts now," the minutes said.

Economists said that most of the objections to reducing rates further seemed to be tactical rather than economic - a fear that too large a cut would cause the pound to plummet and may be viewed by the markets as a panic measure.

Adam Cole, UK economist at HSBC, said: "Taken together with the Fed's move yesterday and Mr Buiter's call for a 0.75 per cent cut, the retail sales data have clearly improved the chance of a further base rate cut at the December meeting."

However, the consensus is that the Bank is unlikely to cut again so soon after its November report showed inflation on target and will wait for fresh evidence of the pace of the downturn to emerge.



M&S woes force supplier to close factories

BY SARAH CUNNINGHAM

TRADING problems at Marks & Spencer, which is struggling to maintain its grip on the clothing market, are forcing one of its main suppliers, William Baird, to close two factories and lay off 477 staff.

The textiles group said yesterday that it is in talks with unions about the possible closure of a factory in Tyne & Wear which makes women's wear and employs 268 people, and a plant near Dudley in the Midlands which makes trousers and employs 209 people.

Baird said it was looking for a buyer for the factories, which make leisurewear for M&S, but sources close to it said there was little chance of one being found.

A spokeswoman for M&S said she was aware that the closures were a result of a fall in orders and said: "We are very saddened by any job losses that are incurred."

The closures, which will cost Baird £2.5 million, are the first to be announced by an M&S supplier since M&S revealed that its first-half profits had fallen by 23 per cent. Sir Richard Greenbury, chairman, described the clothing market as "a bloodbath".

Investors are still waiting, with increasing impatience, for news about who is to run the company. Keith Oates, deputy chairman, appeared to put himself forward two weeks ago to replace Sir Richard Greenbury as chairman, with Peter Salsbury, currently a managing director, as chief executive.

Lords defeat costs KPMG £1m

BY JASON NISSE

KPMG, the accountant, faces a legal bill of more than £1 million after losing a landmark House of Lords ruling on client confidentiality.

The Lords yesterday upheld an injunction granted by Mr Justice Pumfrey that KPMG could not work on an investigation, ordered by the Sultan of Brunei, into how the Brunei Investment Agency (BIA) was run when it was headed by Prince Jefri Bolkiah, the Sultan's estranged brother.

The BIA is believed to have lost billions of pounds on a series of investments made while under Prince Jefri's control. The Sultan has fired his brother as head of the BIA and appointed Arthur Andersen, the firm of accountants, to take charge of Amedeo, the construction group previously run by Prince Jefri.

In September the 44-year-old playboy prince gained an injunction against KPMG when Mr Justice Pumfrey agreed that there was a potential for KPMG to breach the "Chinese walls" that exist within professional firms to protect client confidentiality. KPMG had previously been used by Prince Jefri for his own investigation into the BIA's investments.

The injunction was overturned by the Court of Appeal but Prince Jefri decided to take the case to the Lords.

Finding against KPMG, the Lords said it had to pay Prince Jefri's costs. These are expected to be at least as much as the £500,000 KPMG spent on the case.

Though the Lords did not give reasons yesterday - the full ruling is not expected to be published until next year - the worry in the City is that they will agree with Mr Justice Pumfrey that City firms cannot be trusted to police internal Chinese walls. "It is fair to say that many organisations in the City will be interested to see the detail of this judgment," said a KPMG spokesman.

James Capel Investment Management advertisement. Text includes: 'James Capel welcomes Private Clients', 'We are one of the leading investment managers for private clients.', 'Our investment strategy is formulated at the highest level but your portfolio is personalised to your own unique needs, not pooled with others.', 'The Private Client Specialist.', 'James Capel Investment Management Member HSBC Group', 'For more information on how we manage portfolios of £200,000 or more, please call Simon Corbett or Nandita Khanna on 0171 336 9195, fax them on 0171 283 3187 or write to them at the address below. 6 Bevis Marks, London EC3A 7JQ email: nandita.khanna@jamescapelhsbc.com'



# High gas prices lift BG profits by £61m

By CARL MORTISHED  
INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS EDITOR

BG, the gas pipeline and exploration company, yesterday reported higher than expected profits due to good volume growth and high gas prices in the UK.

BG's operating profit increased by £61 million in the third quarter to £99 million, including a £53 million leap in profits at Transco, the pipeline business, to £62 million. At the pre-tax level, third-quarter profit almost doubled to £21 million.

Gas volumes are normally weak in the summer quarter but Transco benefited from a 6 per cent increase in volumes transported and a £12 million revenue gain from the cooler summer. Operating costs fell by £48 million, as part of the drive to reduce the cost base following the 13 per cent price cut imposed by Ofgas in 1997. Gas prices were unseasonably high in the third quarter, in part due to the unusually cool temperatures and a slow start-up to gas production from the Britannia field.

Volatility in the gas market has prompted Ofgas and Transco to form a working group to devise a new market to replace the flexibility market used to balance gas flow in the pipeline system.

BG said that it was on target for job reductions of 2,500 promised in September 1997. Philip Hammond, finance director, said that BG Exploration had reviewed all its assets on the basis of a \$12 (£7) oil price and had concluded no write-downs were necessary.



Helpfire Group, the accident management assistance company, is buying Countrywide Assistance for almost £2 million, to be funded by an £8.9 million share placing. Pictured (left to right) are Michael Symons, Helpfire chief executive, Mark Jackson, deputy chief executive, and David Lindsay, financial adviser

# Abbey National snaps up NatWest credit providers

By ADAM JONES

ABBEY NATIONAL yesterday showed its faith in UK consumers' continuing hunger for credit when it bought a trio of businesses from NatWest.

The stock market responded by marking up the shares of

both banking groups after Abbey paid NatWest £347 million in cash for Lombard Motor Finance, Lombard Tricity Finance and Lombard Business Equipment Leasing.

The three businesses, which employ 2,100 people, lend money to consumers and small

businesses through intermediaries such as retailers, including Dixons. Abbey will re-name the three and integrate them into its First National credit arm. NatWest will keep its other Lombard businesses, including Lombard Direct.

Tim Ingram, head of Abbey

National's consumer finance operation, said that it was too early to say what would happen to staffing in the businesses that it is buying.

Mr Ingram admitted that the consumer credit market had weakened recently, with Abbey National tightening its

lending criteria, but said that the bank had long-term faith in this area of lending.

NatWest said that the sale, which will lead to a profit of £115 million before tax, is consistent with its strategy of dealing with credit customers directly, rather than through intermediaries.

NatWest is also selling some of the offshore activities of Coutts, its elite private banking arm, to Royal Bank of Canada. Analysts believe that the sum involved is less than £10 million.

The businesses serve institutional and corporate clients, managing funds and employee benefit plans and acting as corporate trustees.

Abbey National shares rose 13p to £2.41. NatWest rose 11p to 99p.

# Defence firms to boost MoD salary

TEN defence companies are being asked to donate about £165,000 a year between them to boost the salary of a senior civil servant (Adam Jones writes). Tony Edwards was made head of defence export sales at the Ministry of Defence earlier this month. He is being

seconded from TI Group, the engineer, where he earned a basic salary of £315,000 last year as chairman of the aerospace interests. He starts at the MoD on Friday for an initial period of three years.

Mr Edwards will be paid £165,000 a year by the MoD,

with a performance-related bonus of up to £15,000 a year. This civil service salary would traditionally have been augmented by payments by TI. However, the Government has ended this practice, saying it is worried that there could be a conflict of interest.

To ensure that the MoD could still recruit a top-ranking executive, the Defence Industries Council, a grouping of defence companies pledged to top up his salary.

TI will not contribute but will still pay some of Mr Edwards's pension contributions.

## BUSINESS ROUNDUP

### Wife of Colt chief sells £5m of shares

MARGARET CHISHOLM, the wife of Paul Chisholm, chief executive of Colt Telecom, yesterday sold more than £5 million worth of shares in the company. Mrs Chisholm sold 800,000 shares at 664p each, compared with the price after flotation in December 1996 of just 67p. The company's shares have performed strongly since flotation, peaking at 832p this year before the recent market turmoil, and lifting the company into the elite FTSE 100.

A source close to the group said: "This is less than 8 per cent of his [Mr Chisholm's] holdings. It really was only because there are very few periods during the year that you can sell shares. As far as I know, there is no intended use of the cash." Mr Chisholm's family now owns 2.4 million shares in Colt and has options over 6.8 million shares worth a total of £65 million. Colt shares fell 2p to 710p, Colt's largest investor is Fidelity Investors, which owns a 55 per cent stake in the company. Fidelity was the sole financial backer of Colt before it came to the stock market, and has not sold any shares since its flotation. Other shareholders include The Capital Group and The Bank of New York. *Commentary, page 31*

### NZ purchase for RSA

ROYAL & SunAlliance, the UK's largest general purpose insurer, is to buy Guardian Assurance, the New Zealand life business, from Guardian Royal Exchange for NZ\$182.5 million (£58 million). RSA said it will now have about NZ\$2.2 billion funds under management, an increase of 47 per cent and, by in-force premiums, will rank fourth in that market. Earlier this year RSA acquired the New Zealand life insurance and investment management subsidiaries of Norwich Union, and also announced a tie up with Southern Cross, the country's largest medical insurer.

### Sema in NHS deal

SEMA GROUP has been chosen to replace Computer Sciences Corporation as the central systems co-ordinator for the National Health Service in Scotland. The contract is worth up to £60 million over five years, with the possibility to extend for two more years. Sema is to work with the NHS in a project to modernise its systems, and 140 staff, mostly in Edinburgh, Paisley and Dundee, will transfer to the group. The contract with Computer Sciences has been controversial and dogged with problems. Sema will start work immediately but will not take charge of the entire project until next April.

### Friendly wins contract

FRIENDLY HOTELS has been awarded a 30-year contract to operate three hotels with a total of 300 rooms in Brighton, Hatfield, Hertfordshire, and Wigan. The company has been awarded the contract by Norwich Union, which has just acquired the properties from the independent Oak Hotels chain in a deal brokered by Brodie Marshall Hotels, the property agent. Friendly also said yesterday that its United Kingdom hotel occupancy in the current year is 4 per cent ahead of last year, with average room rate up 7.2 per cent.

### Saatchi's Toyota task

SAATCHI & SAATCHI, the advertising agency, has won the pan-European launch advertising account for Toyota's new small Yaris car, worth £70 million. The agency also said that it is to expand its work for Visa EU after the card issuer chose it to handle integrated communications in Europe; the account is worth \$35 million (£21 million), Saatchi said. Advertising for the Yaris launch is to break in 17 countries from April 1999. Saatchi said that it won the Yaris work in a pitch against six other European agencies and the extra Visa work against competition from BBDO and J Walter Thompson.

### Belgo buys restaurant

BELGO, the fast-food restaurant operator, is to acquire the former White Tower restaurant in the West End of London from Roy Ackerman's The Restaurant Partnership for a total of about £450,000. It is issuing 3.9 million shares — worth £312,000 at yesterday's price of 8p — and paying £150,000 in cash. It will spend £200,000 converting it to an upmarket Vietnamese eatery akin to Pasha, its fashionable Moroccan restaurant. Tonight the group will open its latest Belgo moules et frites outlet in Bristol, following an £870,000 investment.

### Probus profits revive

PROBUS ESTATES, the property company, said that its financial position had improved as it reported pre-tax profits of £3.26 million for the year to September 30, compared with a loss of £24.89 million last time. The company said it intends to acquire further properties, is negotiating to sell the Waterdale Shopping Centre in Doncaster and plans substantially to re-develop its hotel and leisure properties in Aviemore. Turnover for the period was £7.23 million (£7.83 million), with earnings per share at 2.4p, up from a loss 32.0p per share.

### Judge tells Microsoft to alter software

By CHRIS AYRES

MICROSOFT, the software group embroiled in a bitter anti-trust legal battle with the US Justice Department, yesterday received a further blow when it was ordered to alter its Windows 98 and Internet Explorer software.

A US judge, Ronald Whyte, issued a preliminary injunction, saying that Microsoft had probably violated a contract with Sun Microsystems by improperly using the company's Java computer language in its Windows operating system.

The ruling casts a further shadow over Microsoft, which has been accused of using bullying tactics to crush its competitors.

The court ruling was the result of a lawsuit launched by Sun last year accusing Microsoft of copyright infringement and unfair competition. Sun claims that Microsoft bought a licence to use Java, and then created a Windows-only version of the language.

According to Sun, the Windows version of Java now poses a serious threat to the original language, because Microsoft holds a near monopoly of the personal computer operating system market.

Microsoft yesterday said that it was "disappointed" at the outcome, but would comply with the court ruling.

A spokesman said: "We respect the court's ruling and are reviewing our legal options. This is a preliminary ruling and only one step in the broader lawsuit. Microsoft remains confident that once all the facts are presented to the court, Microsoft will be seen to be in compliance with its contract."

### TOURIST RATES

	Bank	Bank
	Days	Spots
Australia \$	2.69	2.69
Austria Sch	20.85	18.99
Belgium Ft	60.25	53.89
Canada \$	2.718	2.530
Cyprus Cyp £	0.8709	0.7951
Denmark Kr	11.21	10.52
Egypt	5.91	5.30
France Mk	9.05	8.30
France Ft	5.85	5.08
Germany Dm	2.958	2.714
Greece Dr	495	458
Hong Kong \$	13.78	12.58
India	129	109
Indonesia	16384	11384
Israel NIS	1.179	1.089
Italy Lit	7.25	6.95
Japan Yen	2941	2704
Malaysia	217.91	200.38
Malta	0.954	0.905
Netherlands Gld	3.342	3.047
New Zealand \$	3.24	3.01
Norway Kr	13.01	12.07
Portugal Esc	205.06	277.05
S Africa R	10.15	9.10
Spain Ptas	249.25	230.46
Sweden Kr	14.18	13.08
Switzerland Ft	2.453	2.239
Taiwan Twd	150.276	147.839
USA \$	1.780	1.637

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# Royal audience for the MPC



## COMMENTARY by our City Editor

When Her Majesty the Queen took her farewells of the members of the Monetary Policy Committee yesterday, she was probably little wiser than the rest of us as to what they intend to do with interest rates next month. But if she had been listening to the car radio as she travelled round the City, she would have been left in little doubt about what they should do. The pressure for a further cut is mounting, and it should be a half point rather than another quarter.

Intriguingly, the volatile Wilhelm Buiter had opted for a novel three-quarter point cut in October but failed to persuade his colleagues to be brave. But if they were wary of over-kill then, they should have no such qualms now. The retail sales figures that came out yesterday are a grim acknowledgment that the anecdotal evidence is true: a consumer recession has hit the high street. When Marks & Spencer's Sir Richard Greenbury told the world that consumer spending had fallen off a cliff, he was speaking from the shop floor. He clearly did not envisage the drastic consequences that his outspoken comments might have for his own company but he did give many other retailers the satisfaction of knowing that they were not alone in their suffering.

The vital Christmas season and that will have ramifications that ricochet well beyond retailing and out towards the dwindling manufacturing base of the country.

The Queen had, no doubt, been listening to the financial news as she sped towards the Bank of England, so she would have known of the fall in retail sales. She might also have wanted to tread on sore feelings by mentioning the matter of job losses at Merrill itself. But there is a sad irony in the fact that her visit to the Square Mile coincides with a period when City workers are collecting their P45s at the rate of hundreds every day.

Maybe Michael Marks of Merrill Lynch was brave enough to suggest that Her Majesty might relay that message to the MPC. The Queen would not have wanted to tread on sore feelings by mentioning the matter of job losses at Merrill itself. But there is a sad irony in the fact that her visit to the Square Mile coincides with a period when City workers are collecting their P45s at the rate of hundreds every day.

### Saying sorry is not enough, Minister

Goffrey Robinson is renowned as the millionaire businessman member of the Government. He is also, however, the member prone to over-sights when it comes to declaring his directorships, and the trust beneficiary who chooses to keep his interests in offshore tax havens. These would be dubious qualifications for a treasury minister in a

banana republic, but in Britain they are surely unacceptable. Mr Robinson has until now treated his critics scathingly. Yesterday, a House of Commons Select Committee demanded that he should at least apologise for his third failing to comply with House rules.

However, an apology is not enough. Given the heavy agenda facing the Treasury, it is vital that the role of Paymaster General goes to someone whose own financial dealings will not cast a shadow over the work that must be done for the country's financial benefit. There are still many questioned left unanswered about Mr Robinson's business dealings. Did he ever provide a reasonable explanation for why the accounts of Hollis Group, a company of which he was chairman in 1990, record that he was paid a hefty £200,000 for his work? Mr Robinson claimed that he received no money from Hollis, and used that as an excuse for not having declared his chairmanship to Parliament.

Mr Robinson's offshore trusts also remain something of a mystery. We do not know the full extent of the funds that are in them, nor do we know why the wonderfully named Madame Bourgoise should have chosen to endow the trusts so generously for Mr Robinson's benefit.

But given the fact that the Government is now going to be examining the tax position of the Channel Islands, Mr Robinson's interests once more put him at risk of suggestions of potential conflict of interest. His wealth, while not to be begrudged by those who do not have such fortunes, does nonetheless appear to have coloured his views in a way that may make it difficult for him to identify with the Treasury's rank-and-file customers. Mr Robinson, you may recall, did have trouble coming up with a suitable design for a new savings product that would be accessible by all. The painful confinement of the Isa, which has still to result in a happy

event, is not a good advertisement for Mr Robinson's talents. But what ever his abilities, it is his complicated business background that makes Mr Robinson's continued position in the Treasury untenable, despite the determined support of the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

### Safeway success is educating Archie

Safeway has arrived at a crossroads. It has just ended its expensive campaign of offering piles of extra points to its loyalty card holders. The campaign had a dramatic effect on increasing sales, and Safeway must now prove that it can keep up the momentum without spending another fortune on promotions. Only two weeks have passed since the campaign ended, but so far so good. This leaves one wondering not so much about what will happen to Safeway from now on, but what on earth has been going on at J Sainsbury and, particularly, Asda. Sainsbury's said not so long ago that its sales were up by a much slimmer degree, while Safeway also appears to be beating Asda.

Asda's whole strategy is based on beating its rivals on same-store sales, so something must have gone very wrong.

As if Archie Norman did not have enough to worry about at Central Office, arranging the Ikea chairs and recruiting fashion designers to the cause, he now has a lot to concern him in Leeds. To add insult to injury, the value of his options will also have taken a hammering. Asda does not report its figures until mid-December, and even then it will be as parsimonious with up-to-date trading information as usual. But if its sales are as the market is beginning to fear, then Asda is also at a crossroads and Norman may have to begin putting a bit more of his energy and innovation back into the business that made his name.

### Is Colt a mare?

IS THERE an odd one out in the following list? Betterware, DFS Furniture, Harris Queensway and Colt Telecom? Investors in the latter — the superstellar performing Colt — will certainly hope so because shares in all the others never recovered after directors decided to sell down part of their holdings at what subsequently proved to be at or near the peak. However, the decision by Paul Chisholm, Colt's chief executive, to sell down part of his holding has a worryingly familiar ring to it.

# Price crackdown will hit services warns Hyder

BY CHRISTINE BUCKLEY, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

WATER pipes will leak more and sewers will fall into disrepair in a return to "the bad old days of the public sector", unless the water regulator revises early plans for a pricing crackdown.

That was the warning given yesterday by Hyder, the Welsh multi-utility, which is facing a 15 to 20 per cent cut in its prices from 2000. The cut will mean £60 million to £80 million off revenues.

Graham Hawker, chief executive, said the company could go to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission if it remained fundamentally opposed to the pricing plans after the year-long negotiations. However, he added that "the nuclear option is something you use very carefully".

Hyder believes short-term squeezes on prices will limit its ability to make long-term investment in infrastructure and that eventually, the system could deteriorate seriously.

The price pressure on Hyder could trigger a dividend cut. For the six months to the end of September the company raised its dividend by only 3 per cent to 16.8p a share. Mr

Hawker said Hyder would have to review dividend growth that was "clearly unsustainable" after regulatory decisions by both the water and electricity watchdogs were clear. He said: "I don't know whether there will be a cut." Comparing Hyder's gloom with the current high-growth dividend policies of other water companies, Mr Hawker said: "If there is a brick wall coming, it is better to walk sensibly to it rather than running towards it."

The company is trying to di-

versify to limit the impact of regulatory controls. Along with water price curbs it also faces a review of electricity distribution charges.

Hyder said it has recruited 305,000 gas customers and is waiting for a further 40,000 to pay off their debts to British Gas before they switch.

Profits from its infrastructure business, which involves public-private partnership work and the operation of overseas water activities, rose to £16.7 million from £14.3 million, although £15.1 million of that was from the sale of operations.

On plans by the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions to overhaul water pricing plans, Mr Hawker said Hyder favoured charging according to council tax bands. This would increase or decrease annual bills by about 5 per cent.

Hyder shares fell 28½p to 82½p on its half-year results which saw a 2.3 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £107.8 million. Earnings per share, before the impact of the windfall tax, rose from 53.7p to 64.7p.



Hawker: brick wall coming

Tempus, page 32



Looking up: Jim Hodgkinson, chief executive, left, and Tony Collyer, finance director at New Look's Oxford Street store

# New Look puts stores on notice

NEW LOOK, the clothing retailer that floated in June, is giving its French and German businesses 18 months to return to profit or face closure (Sarah Cunningham writes).

The three French and 28 German stores made a loss of £600,000 in the first half, blemishing an otherwise strong performance which saw pre-tax profit rise from £19.9 million to £22.1 million. The latter figure is after £2 million flotation costs.

Like-for-like sales in the first half rose 2.7 per cent but have since fallen to a just under 1 per cent decline. Jim Hodgkinson, chief executive, said the current sales are "significantly better than the market as a whole".

Earnings per share rose from 7.4p to 8.3p and the company is paying an interim dividend of 1.8p. The shares, which traded at 169p when they came to market this year, rose 1p to 145p yesterday.

Tempus page 32

# Britons boost Disney

A 20 per cent jump in British visitors to Disneyland Paris helped Euro Disney shrug off the effects of France's winning World Cup campaign with 1998 profits up a third to Fr290 million (£31 million). The UK is now its biggest market outside France (Dominic Walsh writes).

The 34 per cent rise in net income reflected a 6 per cent rise in underlying revenues and a contribution of almost Fr100 million from the nearby Val d'Europe development.

The number of visitors fell to 12.51 million, but average spend was up 3 per cent to Fr258. Revenues from hotels and restaurants were 10 per cent higher, while Hotel occupancy rose from 78 per cent to 80.9 per cent.

Tempus, page 32

# BA seeks Olympic Airways stake

FROM PHILIP PANGALOS IN ATHENS

BRITISH AIRWAYS is understood to be in talks to acquire a strategic 20 per cent stake in Olympic Airways, Greece's state-run national airline.

Senior Athens sources say that BA has already held talks with Greek Government representatives handling the proposed sale of a strategic stake in Olympic.

BA is said to have held talks with Salomon Smith Barney, the US investment bank advising the Greek Government on how to deal with the ailing Olympic Airways. Options include a strategic alliance with another carrier and the sale of a minority stake in the airline.

A British Airways spokesman in Athens yesterday refused to comment. News of BA's talks with Olympic has sparked renewed speculation that Lufthansa, the German carrier, may also be interested in acquiring a stake in Olympic. Lufthansa has previously denied that it was interested in acquiring a stake in Olympic, but its spokesman in Athens now says that "times can change", though any form of share exchange is entirely ruled out.

Meanwhile, Tassos Mandelias, Greece's Transport Minister, yesterday reiterated that the Government is in the process of modernising Olympic and is seeking a suitable strategic partner or investor. The Government is ready to sell 15 to 20 per cent of Olympic and is ready to discuss participation in the airline's management with its eventual partner. Olympic, founded by the late Aristotle Onassis, is the only airline in southern Europe not to have made an alliance in an increasingly competitive market place.

In April, the Government launched a restructuring plan for the loss-making Olympic. The five-year plan is intended to ensure that Olympic survives by saving at least £600 million. The plan, involving more state aid to help to ease Olympic's debt, was approved by the EU in September.

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DAY NOVEMBER 19 1998

NEWS ROUNDUP

Colt chief... m of shares

Paul Chisholm, chief... more than £5 million... Mrs Chisholm... the price after... the company's share... at 53p... the price after... the company's share...

rebase for RSA

in NHS deal

ly wins contract

its Toyota tas

buys restaura

us profits revive

Is your company structured to weather the storms of a pending recession?







# Monopoly boards face challenge

The UK is about to have one of the toughest competition regimes in Europe. Cyrus Mehta assesses the strain that it will put on the OFT and the companies that it polices

The new Competition Act, which received Royal Assent last week, radically reforms the UK's competition law and paves the way for sweeping changes in the control of cartels, monopolies and anti-competitive behaviour. The Act is largely modelled on EU competition laws, and outlaws agreements and business practices that damage competition in the UK. The Government recognises that the new legislation involves a sea change in the UK regulatory framework and has given businesses a transitional period until March 1, 2000 in which to adapt to the new rules.

The Act virtually transforms the role of the Office of Fair Trading, providing it with significant new powers to monitor and enforce the UK competition rules. Firms who flout the rules will be fined up to 10 per cent of their UK turnover. OFT officials will be able to carry out so-called "dawn raid" investigations at company premises in order to uncover evidence of anti-competitive behaviour. The dawn raid powers are modelled on the European Commission's procedures, but go even further by making it a criminal offence to obstruct the OFT, or to supply false or misleading information. Furthermore, although the Act does not expressly say so, it seems likely that businesses will be able to sue their competitors in the courts for competition, thus opening up the possibility of US style anti-trust litigation in this country. The UK is set to have one of the toughest competition regimes in Europe.

The coming months to conduct a "health check" on their existing agreements and practices, taking legal advice where appropriate.

The Act outlaws anti-competitive agreements, and so a starting point will be to identify contracts containing restrictive clauses, such as:

- restrictions on the prices which may be charged;
- restrictions on the customers or markets which may be supplied;
- exclusive supply or purchasing commitments;
- non-compete covenants.

Particular care will need to be taken over contracts with direct competitors, eg joint selling or purchasing "pools" or other types of joint ventures. In future, such arrangements may need to be notified to the OFT for clearance or exemption.

The Act also prohibits dominant firms from abusing their market position. According to the OFT's draft guidelines, firms with a 40 per cent market share are likely to be considered dominant and will need to assess the impact of the Act on their pricing and marketing strategies. Problem areas will include:

- using discriminatory pricing policies (eg, offering "loyalty" discounts and rebates);
- engaging in predatory pricing tactics;

- refusing to supply goods or services to a competitor or customer;
- refusing to licence intellectual property rights;
- refusing to allow a competitor to use essential facilities;
- "tying" or bundling non-related goods or services.

It will be important to bring the new legislation to the attention of staff - particularly those in sales and marketing divisions, who will need to understand the problems that can arise when negotiating agreements or formulating pricing or marketing policies. Companies should also consider implementing compliance programmes in order to educate and train staff about the "dos and don'ts" under the new legislation. The OFT has confirmed that an effective compliance programme could help a company to mitigate fines if it breaches the Act - but only if it is taken seriously and has the full backing of senior management. The OFT is in the process of drawing

up guidelines that will help to clarify the scope of the new regime. Firms will also be able to apply to the OFT for confidential guidance if they are uncertain whether an agreement or course of action could cause problems. In addition, firms can also apply for exemption for individual contracts.

Perhaps the single most important change is that UK competition law will now focus on the economic impact of agreements or market strategies. The Government has accepted that the Act will only affect agreements that have a significant effect on the market - according to the OFT's draft guidance, the Act will only apply where the parties have a combined market share of 25 per cent. In addition, once a firm reaches the threshold for dominance (in many cases a 40 per cent market share), it is subject to the rules on abuse of dominant position. Consequently, in order to understand how the Act applies to them, firms will need to evaluate their market shares in the sectors in which they operate. Economics, of course, is an uncertain science and an economics-based approach will inevitably make it much more difficult to judge whether a given agreement or strategy is lawful or not.

The Act is substantially based on EU competition law, and many large multinational businesses operating in Europe will already be reasonably familiar with the concepts in the new UK legislation. The Act is likely to prove more of a challenge to domestic businesses operating in purely local markets, eg, bus operators, certain utilities and retailers, for which EU competition legislation may have had less impact.

The new Act marks a watershed in UK competition policy. It brings the UK into line with EU competition law and also with the competition policies of other European countries. It will provide complainants with the means to obtain swift and effective remedies against cartels and restrictive practices either by bringing a complaint to the OFT or, possibly, by pursuing their case in the courts.

However, significant questions remain about the implementation of these new rules. First, a litmus test for the new regime will be the extent to which the OFT is able to cope with its new tasks under the Act.

There are plans to recruit 50 new staff to deal with the anticipated workload. It is essential that the OFT is properly financed and resourced to deal with the volume of notifications, requests for guidance, complaints and investigations that it will undoubtedly face. By contrast, the lack of resources affecting the EU's competition directorate (DG-IV) has placed severe strain on EU competition procedures.

A second potential concern is the ability of businesses to understand the scope of the legislation. Firms have a right to know where they stand. The OFT must be encouraged to produce clear and detailed guidelines, particularly in relation to its handling of anti-competitive practices by dominant companies, such as discriminatory pricing. While the guidelines cannot act as a substitute for legal advice, they will have little value unless they give firm, practical assistance to companies.

Thirdly, there continues to be confusion as to how the UK regime will interact with EU competition policy. Although the Act requires the UK authorities to take decisions that are consistent with EU competition law, it still leaves some scope for differences in policy. Businesses want to be subject to a single, consistent set of rules wherever they may operate in European markets. If the Government is to meet its stated objective of aligning the two regimes, it will need to be clear about how the UK and EU competition bodies will handle cases straddling the two jurisdictions.

Cyrus Mehta is a partner and head of Nabarro Nathanson's EU competition practice.

# Russia in need of 'third way' as economic winter bites

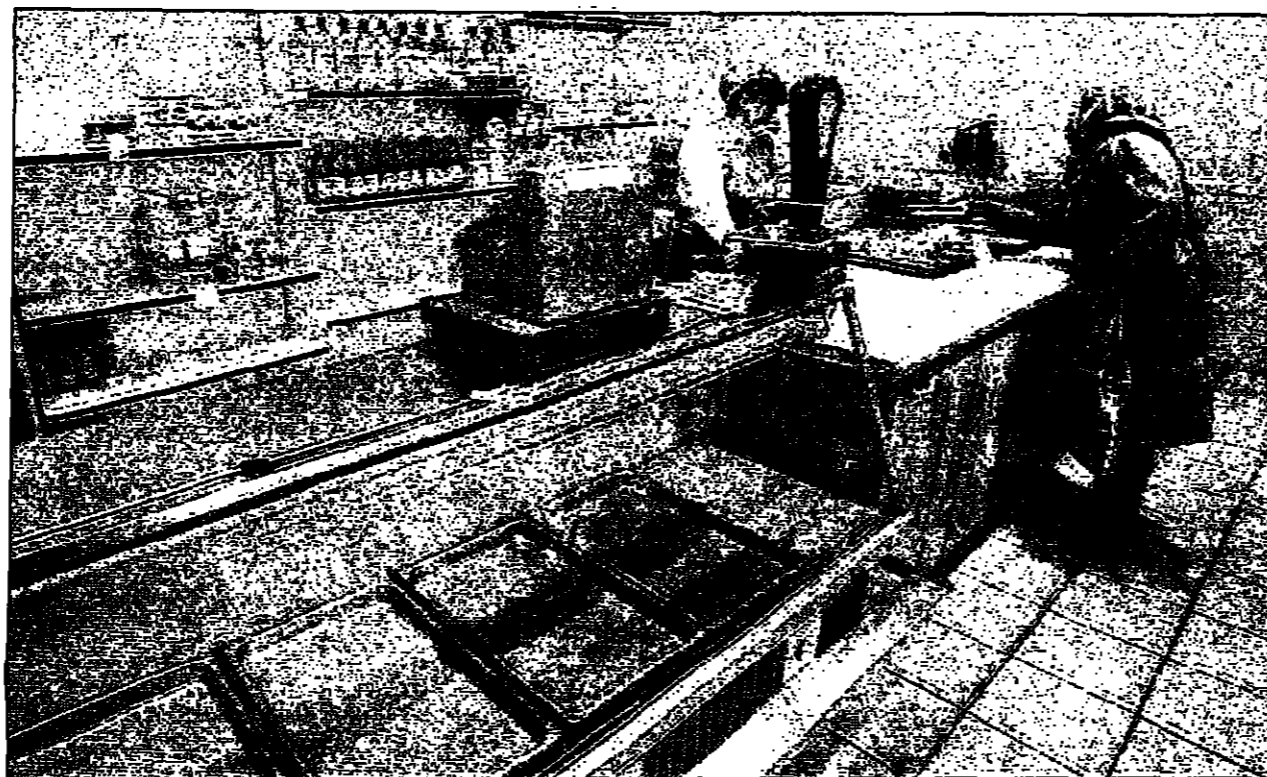
Janet Bush says the IMF is wrong to cling to rigid free-market orthodoxy

Russia's parliament has this week been debating a bill that seeks to establish the basic needs of Russians in order to calculate minimum wages and pensions. The minimum requirements for a woman, a Dumas draft bill has decided, include six pairs of panty hose and five pairs of underwear every two years. She should be allowed two bras every three years, a skirt and dress every five years and a winter coat every eight years. One bath towel is deemed necessary every 23 years.

If this isn't enough to ram home the message that Russia is unimaginably different from industrialised economies in the West, nothing is. Even after the shock of the catastrophic events of mid-August, many financial market economists, together with the International Monetary Fund, are still clinging to the idea that, with a sweeping restructuring of Moscow banks, more privatisation and proper tax collection, Russia will return, redeemed, to market reform.

Most analysts of Russia's current problems still revolve around highly orthodox analysis honed on 19th Street in Washington. In this mind-set, there is no acceptance of the possibility of a "third way" between the pure free market and communism.

The IMF is still furious that it allowed itself to be pressed by the US Treasury into giving Russia (in fact, assorted mafios



The quest for hard currency has taken precedence over food and fuel for a people yet to be won over to capitalism

and oligarchs with Swiss bank accounts and Russian banks that were speculating against their own currency) the first tranche of a further \$2.6 billion in July.

An IMF delegation in Moscow this week but all reports suggest that there is a stubborn impasse between the Fund and the Russian Government. The IMF is not prepared to release any more money until it is assured that Russia is set against the option of printing money to get itself out of trouble and is committed to a return to free market reform. It made no secret of its disappointment with last week's economic plan which it criticised as short on specifics and long on state intervention.

Meanwhile, Russia is resorting to emotional blackmail aimed at getting Western lead-

ers to persuade the IMF to come up with new funds.

Yuri Maslyukov, Deputy Prime Minister, said yesterday that, without more foreign money, Russia faced a "national catastrophe that would write off the free market economy, democracy and the territorial integrity of Russia".

Yevgeny Primakov pressed the case for more IMF funds with Gerhard Schröder, the German Chancellor, in Moscow, and with Al Gore, US Vice-President, who was in Malaysia for the annual Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation summit. With meteorologists predicting that Russia will suffer its worst winter for 30 years, moral suasion has already netted Russia food aid deals worth \$1 billion from the US, Canada and the European Union.

Behind the intense resonances of the Russian poor bracing themselves for winter, however, is a reality that is far more complex, and points to the absurdity of Western insistence on adherence to pure free market principles in the middle of an economic disaster zone.

While the Russian Government circulates the begging bowl, the largely privatised Russian oil companies are set to export 115 million tonnes of oil this year, a post-Soviet record, and gas exports are up 2 per cent on last year. An estimated 500,000 tonnes of wheat have been exported this year, 20 per cent of the total amount of food aid so far pledged by the West.

Clearly, the search for hard currency is taking precedence over food and fuel for the people which, so far at least, is thankfully being met by Western charity. The Government is beginning to try to change this balance. Sergei Gerashov, Fuel and Energy Minister, has warned oil companies that they may face export restrictions if they do not supply domestic customers as well as those overseas. This is, of course, an instance of state intervention that would presumably horrify IMF ideologues.

Not everyone is still uncritically regretful that the West's favourite Russian economic reformers have been booted out of the Government. One senior Washington official said that the West had perhaps been naive to back the reformers because they had never had the instinctive support of the Russian people. There has, perhaps not in the IMF but elsewhere, been a realisation that the path to capitalism can

only be successfully negotiated with the will of the people and if the fruits are shared more widely. It is also acknowledged that the state must play a role in Russia's revival and that, beyond the pressing need to sort out the banking system, restructure debt and stabilise the budget, there is a need for top-to-bottom structural reform, not just of the banking sector but also of the legal and tax systems.

The American Chamber of Commerce recently organised a conference of leading US companies on Russia's prospects. Amid the gloom - Russian industrial output fell more than 11 per cent in October - American firms were positive as long as chaos acts as a catalyst for change.

Stan Golis, vice-president of Exxon Neftegas, said: "This year could be a watershed year for Russia... but political will is necessary to create the needed legislation that will allow companies to work here." In the months ahead Russia will have to carry on negotiating the rescheduling of its debts, close banks and agree a believable budget plan. However, it must do much more if sustainable economic progress is to emerge from the current catastrophe.

It must protect tax collectors, 26 of whom were killed and 74 wounded in 1996 alone. It must prevent future privatisations from selling off valuable assets cheap to a handful of oligarchs in "loans for shares" deals.

It must start to tackle reform of its antiquated Soviet agricultural system, as the International Finance Corporation has recently suggested. If anybody wanted a symbol of the skin deep nature of Russian economic reform, then consider this: the country may have set up a stock market, but it has yet to end an 80-year ban on the free purchase and sale of land.

## BUSINESS LETTERS

### Glaxo remains committed to its own R&D programme

From the Executive Director, Science and Technology, Glaxo Wellcome

Sir, Comments made at a recent conference, as reported in your article "Glaxo is attacked on R&D", (November 13) give the misleading impression that Glaxo Wellcome's strategy is to increase outsourcing at the expense of its own world-class research and development capability.

In the sphere of development, accounting for 75 per cent of our £1.2bn annual R&D spend, we have consciously ruled out the option of so-called "virtual development", where the emphasis is on putting work outside.

Rather, we have decided in favour of restructuring our in-house resources, resulting in important efficiency gains. In research, we have our own ex-

tensive operation, epitomised by our Medicines Research Centre at Stevenage. Yet the pace of scientific advance is such that no one company can have the monopoly on new ideas, so we have entered into extensive partnerships with outside organisations. While we recognise the importance of such external links, Glaxo Wellcome will remain fundamentally dependent on the excellence of its own people in R&D for delivering new medicines of value.

Yours faithfully, JAMES NIEDEL, Executive Director, Science and Technology, Glaxo Wellcome, Glaxo Wellcome House, Berkeley Avenue, Greenford, Middlesex, UB6 0NN.

### FSA must promote high standards

From the Director, Consumers' Association

Sir, Following your article today, "Financial Services Bill in Queen's Speech", November 12) the Consumers' Association would like to highlight the following concerns:

The new single regulator, the Financial Services Authority (FSA) should streamline the regulatory system, cut costs by reducing duplication of effort, ensure consistency and close gaps in the regulatory framework.

Regulation can address issues of process, people or products. The current system has focused primarily on the first, to a limited extent on the second, and not at all on the third. The FSA must adopt a new approach, one that focuses on the outcomes of the sales process, and one that is proactive in ensuring clear minimum standards across the industry.

There should be a statutory duty for the FSA to improve the quality of products available by ensuring that they meet minimum standards.

Whilst caveat emptor (buyer beware) is a valid principle, it cannot be the overriding guideline across the spectrum of retail financial products and services.

Universal coverage is desirable to ensure that the FSA can be a one-stop shop for consumers and industry. The current omission of mortgages, for example, is worrying, and we hope this will be addressed in the Bill.

Yours faithfully, SHEILA MCKECHNIE, Director, Consumers' Association, 2 Marylebone Road, London, NW1 4DF.

Letters to The Times Business section may be sent by fax to 0171-782 5112 or by e-mail to: business@the-times.co.uk Letters should carry a daytime phone number

## Bowe tie cut

STEPHEN RICHARDSON, managing director of Save & Prosper, has escaped from under the steel sultano of Colente Bowe. She is, of course, executive chairman of S&P, the retail investments company which is owned by Flemings. Richardson has endured what some insiders have seen as an awkward relationship with Bowe since the former head of the Personal Investment Authority was appointed above him a year ago, to perform much the same job.

Now Richardson, 45, formerly of Barclays, is off to become chief executive of Flemings' banking arm. But his escape, if such it is, means he replaces Tony Chambers, who,

in his mid-50s and after 15 years at Flemings, has suddenly decided "to pursue his career elsewhere".

The bank denies any suggestion that there's been a tiff, or that Chambers was upset by the decision some months ago to remove him from the group's holding board.

A TOUCHING scene as the Queen's entourage left the Financial Times building on Southwark Bridge. (And she was not entirely responsible for yesterday's traffic chaos in the City. A French warship spent lunchtime navigating up and down the Thames, and Tower Bridge had to be opened twice.)

Anyway, they were on the FT side of the road: limos, cars full of policemen, policemen on motorbikes - you can imagine. Parked on the other side was the single solitary silver Bentley that is the new carriage of this year's Lord Mayor, Lord Levene of Portoken.

Levene, dressed in a business suit, is as we know keen to avoid pomp and ceremony. As the entourage fussed around the Queen, he waited patiently for a gap in the traffic, slipped quietly across the road and opened the passenger door himself.



### Tall story

RUSSEL and Juliette Joffe, who sold their Café Flo chain to the similarly named but unrelated Groupe Flo of France four years ago, have quietly emerged with a new venture. They have opened a pan-world cuisine restaurant in Hampstead and plan a chain. The Joffes have always been quite clever with names, and the latest is no exception.

The French group owns posh restaurants such as La Cupole, a long way upmarket from the Café Flos. Rumour has it that Groupe Flo was unhappy about any possible confusion between the two but could do nothing about it, so they bought the Joffes out instead, at a rumoured £7 million.

The new venture has the curious name of Giraffe, although

the takeaway menu, Giraffe on the Hoof, has a ring to it, I suppose. Groupe Flo also has a cheap and cheerful chain in France called Hippopotamus. "No connection," says Russel. "Giraffe is a name I have always wanted to call a restaurant. Giraffe's a lovely animal - caring and friendly." But what if the French decide to open a zoo and offer to buy you out again? "Please God."

### Stiff price

MY thanks to Computer Weekly for introducing me to a bizarre new piece of business jargon. The magazine and various computer companies have declared war on "stiffing". This is the practice whereby software firms use the small print of their contracts to generate unearned revenue by insisting on huge payments for a slight variation.

The threat is to prevent already installed software from being used, which is catastrophic for their customers. "The software industry is noted for it," says my informant.

AN ARRESTING headline from BG on the trading screens yesterday. "Successful Margarita testing," it said. Hmm. One and a half parts tequila, one part lime juice, one half-part Cointreau... No, I shall have to look it up. I am about to ring BG to check when someone tells me it is a Bolivian oil field.

### Asda be...

A BREATHLESS communication from the Marketing Society about next April's retail forum. "Next year's most important new marketing event" features "speakers of the stature of Allan Leighton, chief executive of Tesco".

Hang on, I know Leighton, whose passion for Morris dancing has for some reason been left off recent CVs, has wrongly been reported as heading for Marks & Spencer. But he is at Asda, surely? Terry Leahy is Tesco's chief executive and a speaker, as it happens, at the Society's annual conference yesterday. If they know something he doesn't, reserve your place now.

MARTIN WALLER



Allan Leighton seems to be linked with anyone but Asda

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# Land Securities chief says rental growth may slip

By CARL MORTISHED

LAND SECURITIES, the property group, yesterday gave warning that the rate of rental growth could stall if recent bearish economic forecasts proved well founded. The company raised its half-year rental income by just £5.5 million, mainly because of contributions from new development. Land's revenue profit increased from £125.8 million to £143.7 million, and Peter Birch, chairman, gave warning that second-half revenue profits would not differ much.

Mr Birch said that comparisons were being made in the property sector with the early 1990s, but he insisted that the fundamentals of the business were sound.

Land Securities sees little sign of oversupply in the property market, but finds reduced demand for space in the City, with prospective tenants reluctant to take on new commit-

ments. Mr Birch said: "A potential shake-out in the financial sector remains a threat."

The company's pre-tax profit rose from £124.7 million to £144.7 million in the six months to September, much of the rise resulting from a reduced interest bill.

The group is heavily geared for a £650 million development programme that one analyst described as "perhaps badly timed". Several smaller property companies, such as Pillar and Helical Bar, have turned away from investing and are considering returning capital to shareholders.

However, Ian Murray, Land's finance director said: "If there is more of a downturn, there could be reasonable buying opportunities."

Work is proceeding on two office developments at Theobald's Road, WCI, let to Warner Bros and Nabarro Nathan-

son. Talks are in progress with Hammerson over phasing two developments in Birmingham, where Hammerson's huge Bull Ring redevelopment is likely to clash with Land's Martineau Galleries at a time when major retailers are re-thinking expansion plans. Discussions are also in progress with tenants to avoid oversupply of retail space.

Land is awaiting a decision on a planning application for an extension to its Coppergate shopping centre in York and aims to start construction next year. In Canterbury, Land has planning consent for its 400,000 sq ft Whitefriars retail scheme, with construction due to begin next year.

Land's net rental income rose from £205 million to £211 million in the half.

Adjusted earnings per share were 19.13p (17.74p). The 7.85p dividend is up 3 per cent.



Alistair Arkley, chief executive, left, and Barry Whitehead, finance director, announcing Century Inn's full-year profits

## Century Inns shows 24% profit

ALISTAIR ARKLEY, chief executive of Century Inns, believes that being boring is a virtue in the current economic climate (Dominic Walsh writes).

Unveiling a 24 per cent rise in full-year profits before tax

and exceptional to £10.5 million, Mr Arkley said: "I see us as being a good, solid and reliable business. We're not trying to do anything sexy."

Century is busy investing the cashflow from its 400 tenancies in its Tap & Spile and

Country Inn managed pubs. Turnover jumped by 56 per cent to £53.1 million thanks to the purchase of 78 pubs from Pubmaster in July last year. Earnings per share reached 15.8p (15.1p) and a final payout of 5.3p makes 7.7p (7.4p).

Mr Arkley said: "We have a strategy that doesn't depend on acquisitions. We don't want to run around doing things and getting them wrong. It may sound boring but, in this time of uncertainty, being boring is perhaps a virtue."

## Whitecroft in fresh restructure

Whitecroft, the industrial products company, is embarking on further restructuring. The company announced the £16.7 million sale of Chalmit, its hazardous area lighting business, and said it would withdraw from textile activities, resulting in a second-half exceptional charge of £7 million.

Whitecroft reported a pre-tax interim loss of £7.69 million, against profits of £2.3 million previously. Operating profits before exceptional charges were £600,000 (£33 million). Adjusted losses were 1.8p a share (earnings of 3.7p). The interim dividend is held at 1.75p a share.

### Porter warning

Porter Chadburn, the label manufacturer, yesterday reported an increase in interim profits, but gave warning that overcapacity in Britain and America continued to restrict sales growth. Pre-tax profits for the 26 weeks to September 25 were £2.8 million, up from £2.7 million in the previous first half, despite a drop in turnover to £38.2 million from £39.5 million. Earnings rose to 1.85p a share from 1.74p. The interim dividend is lifted to 0.315p (0.3p).

### Greenway falls

Shares of Greenway Holdings fell 8p to a low of 26p after the oil recycling company reported a fall in pre-tax profits to £224,000 from £422,000 for the six months to September 30 and gave warning of a difficult outlook for the second half. Profits fell despite a 32 per cent rise in turnover to £9.9 million after the completion of two acquisitions. Earnings fell to 0.8p a share (1.49p) and the interim dividend is held at 0.5p a share.

### Better Colour

European Colour, the manufacturer of chemical colours and coatings, yesterday reported a rise in interim pre-tax profits to £2.07 million from £1.79 million on turnover that increased to £18.75 million from £14.06 million for the six months to September 30. Earnings per share were 2.85p, up from 2.46p last time, and the interim dividend was 0.955p (0.865p).

### Steel scheme

Redundant steelworkers will be offered the chance to retrain for other jobs under a scheme launched yesterday. Local authorities and training groups have joined forces with the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation, the steel union, to create one of the biggest programmes of its kind.

## Germany's 'wise men' cautious

By JANET BUSH  
ECONOMICS EDITOR

GERMANY'S respected council of independent economic advisers yesterday sided with the Bundesbank and the European Central Bank against the Bonn Government on the contentious subject of interest rate policy.

In their quarterly economic report, the so-called five wise men said: "It would be fatal, if an irresponsibly expansive monetary policy led to higher capital market rates and became a source of insecurity."

They said that German economic growth would slow next year but that the country did not face deflation and would not fall victim to global recession. They predicted that European interest rates would converge to the current German level of 3.3 per cent.

Oskar Lafontaine, Germany's new Finance Minister, who has been campaigning loudly and publicly for a cut in European interest rates, said that there was room for lower interest rates given low inflation and that 3.3 per cent was "a good starting point" for the European Central Bank.

The wise men's report was sceptical about the growth-oriented policies and job creation priorities of the new administration, saying that more was needed than "good intentions and ambitious targets."

The best way to understand someone is to share the same view.

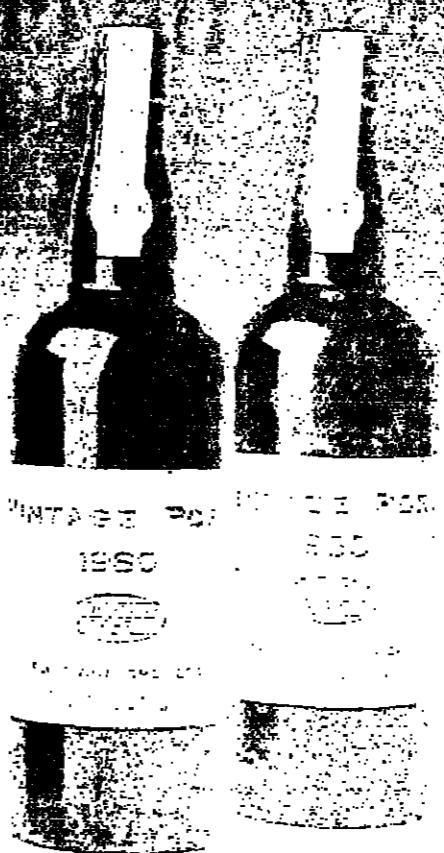


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THE TIMES

## 2 FOR 1 PORT OFFER



See Weekend on Saturday for full details

CHANGING TIMES

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## Customised relations with the client

**T**HE lack of internal communication within the marketing divisions of many large companies is remarkable, given recent advances in technology. Most people, for example, receive junk mail nearly every week advertising products that they have already told the seller they are not interested in buying.

In one recent case, a bank sent a promotional leaflet to a professional woman inviting her to apply for a gold credit card. On the same day, her husband received an invitation from the same company to apply for a platinum credit card. The accompanying promotional blurb boasting that "gold cards are just so passe". The bank may as well have asked them to sign up for a competitor's card.

This problem has led to the development of customer relationship management (CRM) software, the latest hot concept in the

information technology industry. In the UK, one of the fastest-growing CRM companies is Hatton Blue, which recently secured £500,000 worth of venture capital funding from 3i. The company already has sales of £10 million, and is now looking for extra funding to move into the US.

The idea behind Veclius, Hatton Blue's software product, is to bring together all the information about a customer stored within a company and put it in one easily accessible place. For example, this allows a telephone banking service to know everything about a customer when he or she phones up. It sounds obvious, but with customers now as likely to shop via the tel-

ephone, mail order, the Internet, and soon interactive television, it is getting increasingly difficult to keep track of what they are doing.

According to Paul Ratchiff, managing director of Hatton Blue, CRM software allows companies to identify immediately big spending customers and target them accordingly. "It allows companies to act like new entrants to the market," he says. "They can just pick off the most profitable customers."

CRM software should help to put an end to the kind of marketing *faux pas* mentioned earlier. It also means that when a customer phones a company they feel as though the person on the other end of the line knows who they are,



and what they want. A customer who phones up a bank to pay a bill, and also wants to know how many repayments he or she has left on their personal loan with the same company, deserves to feel as

if they have received poor service if the information is not available immediately.

According to Hatton Blue, there are many other advantages to using CRM software. If retailers or call centre employees know everything about their customers, they are much more likely to keep them. To take one example, they can make sure that all junk mail is relevant to them, and does not clash with products they have already bought.

It also improves opportunities for cross-selling. In the financial services sector, if a customer has already bought car insurance from a company, they may also be interested in buying home contents in-

urance, or even a mortgage. The same logic can be applied to nearly all sectors, in particular the mobile phone and utilities industries.

With companies such as the Bank of Scotland, AA Financial Services and Thomas Cook all using CRM software — and many using it as the main plank of their expansion strategies — it is likely the market for such software will explode. Not knowing everything about your customers when they contact you could soon become more of a fatal error rather than a minor gaffe.

□ HIGH streets look set to become more high-tech thanks to new deals between local authori-

ties and the companies that sell advertising space in bus shelters and public toilets. As part of a recent deal in Boston, JC Decaux, the French advertising group, has agreed to build a network of interactive information kiosks around the city. The 24-hour kiosks will provide up-to-the-minute information on local services, restaurants, hotels and tourist services. Industry experts say similar deals could soon follow in the UK.

□ COMPANIES hoping to set up in Cambridge — described by *Newsweek* magazine as one of the world's "hottest tech cities" — will soon be offered up to 1.9 million sq ft of dedicated research and development property, according to the consultants FPD Savills. This will include Cambridge Research Park, Cambourne and Grantia Park.

CHRIS AYRES

## French drugs groups poised to merge

FROM ADAM SAGE IN PARIS

**SANOFI** and **Synthelabo**, the French pharmaceutical groups, are planning to merge, creating a company with a stock market value of about Fr155 billion (£16.5 billion).

Sources close to the companies said yesterday the merger was likely to be announced next month.

The move comes amid speculation that Rhône-Poulenc, France's biggest pharmaceuticals company, is to merge with Germany's Hoechst.

Elf-Aquitaine, which holds a 54.4 per cent stake in Sanofi, will own about 36 per cent of the enlarged group. L'Oréal, which has a majority stake in Synthelabo, would have about 20 per cent of the shares.

The new group would have annual sales of about Fr35 billion and be well placed to boost profits that stood at Fr3 billion in 1997.

Analysts have expected the merger, with shares in Sanofi, France's second largest pharmaceutical group, and Synthelabo, the third largest, rising by 43 per cent each since the beginning of the year. Analysts said the move makes sense, given Sanofi's reputation for innovation and Synthelabo's distribution network. Neither company would comment yesterday.

The challenge for the new group will be to expand outside France, where both companies underperform. Sanofi had a 1997 turnover of Fr21.6 billion but less than 2 per cent of the US market. Synthelabo, with sales of Fr11.7 billion last year, is even weaker abroad.

Sanofi is also likely to sell off its Sanofi Beauty subsidiary, which markets Saint Laurent perfumes and Roger & Gallet soaps. Valued at about Fr6 billion, it had turnover of Fr4 billion in 1997.



Colour code: from left, Jean Chretien, Canada's Prime Minister, Al Gore, and Hong Kong's chief executive, Tung Chee-hwa, display Malaysian batik shirts

## Apec's rescue plan papers over cracks at the summit

FROM A CORRESPONDENT IN CYBERJAYA, MALAYSIA

**PACIFIC RIM** leaders trumpeted an economic rescue plan for Asia yesterday after a week of talks marred by clashes over politics and trade.

The heads of the 21 members at the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (Apec) forum took aim at currency speculators and the harsh judgments of credit-rating agencies, reflecting the anguish of Asian economies sucked dry of capital. A declaration at the end of the two-day summit pledged relief for debt-laden corporations and banks, and stressed the need for growth by encouraging investment and capital inflows.

It envisaged stronger safety nets for populations lurching back into poverty and unemployment after decades of fast-paced growth. But it also pointed to signs of hope: more sta-

ble currencies; slowing inflation; lower debt; and trade surpluses in many Asian nations.

The statement, read by Mahathir Mohamad, the Malaysian Prime Minister, the summit's host, said: "We reaffirm our confidence in the strong

economic fundamentals and prospects for recovery for the economies of the Asia-Pacific."

The declaration papered over wide cracks within the Apec forum which came to a head in an ugly clash between the United States and Malay-

sia after Al Gore, the US Vice-President, hailed "brave people" trying to topple the Mohamad Government with street protests. The Malaysian response described Mr Gore's comments as "disgusting" and "abhorrent".

Other Apec nations rebuked Mr Gore for mixing politics and business and making consensus on economic recovery harder.

Washington pressed Asian economies to respond to the crisis by opening their markets instead of bringing down the shutters, as Malaysia has done by imposing currency controls. Malaysia had demanded Apec support its calls for controls on international hedge funds and short-term capital flows it blames for the catastrophe which has overtaken the region.

The declaration broadly reflected both positions, but offered few specifics. It said finance ministers should "formulate appropriate guidelines for monitoring capital flows" including short-term flows. And it called for a review of the practices of international credit-rating agencies.

## Colours lighten forum

**IN A COLORFUL** contrast to the stark economic crisis they were discussing, Pacific Rim leaders yesterday donned bold batik shirts hand-picked by Malaysia's Prime Minister.

"It's green and bright, like Kuala Lumpur sunshine," Goh Chok Tong, the Singapore Prime Minister, said of his shirt.

Tradition has it that leaders of the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation forum wear

clothing symbolic of the host country in a light-hearted show of unity during their annual summits.

Yesterday, several of the 21 leaders pointed to their shirts as they entered the Malaysian-style Cyberview Lodge, the site of their informal talks in a high-tech business park 25 miles outside Kuala Lumpur.

All were bright, with bold geometric or floral designs and different colours.

Al Gore, the US Vice-President, sitting in for President Clinton, who stayed in Washington to deal with the Iraqi crisis, sported a rose-coloured version with a blue, green and white floral pattern. Mr Gore's shirt was quickly made after Mr Clinton cancelled his visit, officials said.

Jenny Shipley, New Zealand's Prime Minister, wore Malaysia's national dress, consisting of a long blouse over a sarong-like skirt.

## Azlan set for Internet

By CHRIS AYRES

**AZLAN**, the technology distribution and training company, yesterday said it was to spend up to £3 million launching an Internet business, as part of its plan to "get value back" for its long-suffering shareholders.

The company, which is still being investigated by the Serious Fraud Office after a £30 million "black hole" was discovered in its accounts, said it

aimed to offer a comprehensive service over the Internet.

Azlan, which recently appointed its former finance director, Peter Bertram, as chief executive, distributes computer networking products built by US companies such as Cisco Systems and IBM to resellers in 12 different countries. The company now has a training division which helps its customers to learn how to use the products.

Azlan reported a loss for the six months to October 3 of just £100,000, compared with a first-half loss of £7.3 million last year. Shares in the company rose 3½p to 47½p, compared with a high of 287p in 1996.

The company also reported a 9 per cent rise in sales from £141 million to £154 million, while losses per share were cut from 14.2p to just 0.3p. No dividend will be paid for the year ending April 3, 1999.

## MMC condemns Arriva

By MATTHEW BARBOUR

**ARRIVA**, the transport group, has been given six months to divest its Lutonian Buses subsidiary after the Monopolies and Mergers Commission delivered a damning report into its fares policy in the town.

The MMC ruled that predatory pricing by Arriva had effectively forced Lutonian Buses to accept a takeover bid by Arriva.

Arriva, the country's third-largest operator of bus services, acquired Lutonian, which operates 19 minibuses in Luton, for £4.4 million. But in July the purchase was referred to the MMC.

Arriva said it did not agree with the MMC's conclusions and recommendations and was considering its position with legal advisers. The MMC inquiry found Lutonian had provided effective

competition to Arriva's local service, known as Arriva the Shires, offering lower fares on routes not initially served by Arriva but overlapping with Arriva services on the main routes out of Luton town centre.

Arriva the Shires set up its own low-cost minibuses operation, named Challenger, on exactly the same routes and timed to run shortly in front of Lutonian services and at lower fares.

## Jurys close to finalising Doyle deal

By DOMINIC WALSH

**JURYS HOTEL GROUP** is thought to be close to tying up a planned £180 million (£160 million) takeover of its privately owned Dublin rival, Doyle Hotel Group.

When the two sides revealed in September that they were in preliminary discussions, sources close to the negotiations indicated a likely exchange of contracts early in the new year. But with the due diligence all but completed, a deal is now expected to be signed in early December. One insider said: "It's virtually a done deal. Both sides are keen to get cracking on this."

The acquisition, which is subject to shareholder approval, will allow Jurys to virtually double in size, creating a group with a total of 28 hotels and combined revenues of more than £130 million. Doyle's three hotels in Washington DC will take Jurys into the US for the first time. It also has seven hotels in Dublin, including the five-star Burlington, and the Clifton Ford in London's West End.

Analysts have welcomed the acquisition, pointing to the cost savings to be gained from closing the Doyle head office as well as significant economies of scale in areas such as purchasing and sales and

marketing. One said: "The only potential negative is the enlarged group's reliance on the Dublin market. But all the economic signs are positive and it's got some cracking properties there."

The group is being sold by the family of the late P. V. Doyle, who founded the business in 1961 and steadfastly defended its independence until his death in 1988.

The family is to take a significant amount of the sale price in Jurys stock, emerging with about 30 per cent of the combined group.

Three members of the family have been offered boardroom seats as non-executive directors of the company, which is to be renamed Jurys Doyle Hotel Group.

The sale will also allow David Doyle, the former managing director, to cash in his stake, worth an estimated £30 million. Mr Doyle left the group in 1997 after falling out with his sisters over the running of the company.

Some observers believe that the enlarged Jurys could attract the interest of the likes of Marriott, the US hotel business, which is known to have cast an eye over Doyle in the wake of the decision to scrap the planned flotation.

## Cheaper electricity for Ulster

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

**NORTHERN IRELAND** will get cheaper electricity by 2001 after yesterday's go-ahead for an interconnector between the province and Scotland.

Work on the power link, which will cost £150 million, will start next year and will enable Northern Ireland to import electricity from ScottishPower. Northern Irish customers pay about 20 per cent more for their power than those in Britain because of expensive contracts between Northern Ireland Electricity (NIE) and the area's generators.

Harry McCracken, managing director of NIE, said: "The new agreement will bring competitively priced electricity into the Northern Ireland market and, in addition, will allow immediate access by large industrial customers to low-cost generation in Britain."

NIE will fund the bulk of the cost of the link although there will be a £60 million grant from the European Union and a £25 million contribution from ScottishPower.

## Surprise fall in US trade gap

By SAIED SHAH

**THE United States** enjoyed an unexpected narrowing in its September trade deficit, but President Clinton said that weakness in Asia remains a concern.

The US Commerce Department yesterday reported that, because of a near-doubling in civilian aircraft sales, the US goods and services shortfall in September declined to \$14 billion (£8.4 billion), from a revised \$15.9 billion in August. The September figure was far stronger than the \$16.2 billion deficit that analysts

However, for the first nine months of 1998, the shortfall grew to \$123.1 billion, from \$102.2 billion in that period of 1997. US officials say that, because of declining exports to Asia, 1998's deficit could reach \$220 billion to £240 billion.

Mr Clinton said: "Just as the world looked to us in America six years ago to put our economic house in order, today nations look to Japan to take decisive steps to help the Japanese people, to restore growth in Asia and around the world."



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Scandinavian Airlines



### Spanish telecoms company plans big job losses

FROM A CORRESPONDENT IN MADRID

TELEFONICA, the Spanish telecoms company, is to waive its dividend and cut thousands of jobs as part of a plan to cope with intense competition.

The company said yesterday it was setting aside 298 billion pesetas (£1.27 billion) to finance a plan to shed staff. In the next two years the group is to cut 8,000 jobs in addition to 9,300 which were shed in 1998, a source close to the company said.

Telefonica expects that by the end of 2000 it will have cut its workforce by nearly 30 per cent to about 45,000 in Spain. The cuts would be achieved solely through early retirement from 53 years, and through redundancy payments for people who want to leave the company, the management said. But trade unions fear that people will be forced out of work and they have organised demonstrations in many big towns.

Telefonica, to improve presentation of the plan to employees, also announced that no dividend would be paid to shareholders this year. However, shareholders will receive a bonus share for 50 shares held as part of an increase of capital approved in June.

Juan Villalonga, company president, said that this year Telefonica will have invested a record amount of 1,750 billion pesetas on big acquisitions in Latin America and notably in Brazil, and on diversification in the media in Spain.

But Telefonica wants to reduce costs to cope with competition arising from liberalisation of the Spanish telecommunications market.

Many companies, in the fixed and mobile telephone business, have taken advantage of liberalisation to compete with Telefonica which has had to reduce its charges.

# FKI advances 13% but gives downbeat view of prospects

BY ADAM JONES

FKI, the engineering, materials handling and hardware group, gave warning yesterday that it is becoming increasingly vulnerable to recession, despite a 13.5 per cent increase in interim profits.

The group, based in West Yorkshire, also said that it would consider buying back its own shares, which fell 84p yesterday to 130p, compared with a 12-month high of 227p. The fall followed the downbeat

assessment of FKI's markets. Bob Beeston, chief executive, said the downturn in various parts of the global economy had previously had little effect on trading.

He said that recession was now becoming more widespread. "This will inevitably have an impact on the markets in which we operate and makes accurate forecasting more difficult."

However, he insisted that FKI continued "to make progress against this difficult

and uncertain economic background".

Mr Beeston said there was a "noticeable slowdown" in the oil industry, hitting the performance of the engineering division, where sales fell from £200 million to £175.4 million.

The division also suffered from a reduction in demand for electric motors. Mr Beeston said increased orders for turbogenerators — a product of the deregulation of electricity generation in the US — helped to compensate for this.

Mr Beeston said that he was pleased with the integration of Bridon, the wire rope company bought last year. The operating margin at Bridon rose from 7.9 per cent from 5.2 per cent a year previously, with profits in the half year reaching £11.1 million.

Mr Beeston said: "That profit is probably as good as it will ever have made in a full year." FKI will consider small acquisitions to augment Bridon's distribution network.

Overall, turnover in the six months to September 30 fell 2.5 per cent to £610.6 million. This comparison was affected by disposals during the year, particularly the sale of the automotive group last December. Sales from ongoing operations actually rose from £514.7 million to £586.9 million.

The profit before tax rose from £53 million to £72.6 million. Earnings per share rose from 5.95p to 8.3p. An interim dividend of 3.7p (3.2p) per share has been declared and will be paid on February 8.

### Meyer sees bigger savings at Harcros

BY ROBERT COLE CITY CORRESPONDENT

MEYER INTERNATIONAL, the Jewson builder's merchant company, expects to get greater integration benefits from its acquisition of rival Harcros than it first thought. The benefits are also likely to accrue more quickly.

When Meyer bought Harcros from Harrison & Crossfield in December for £305 million it said it expected to save £20 million from combined operating costs in three years. Yesterday it revised its estimate to £25 million in two years.

The integration of Harcros helped Meyer to increase profits by almost 50 per cent. The deal was part-funded by a rights issue which meant the growth in earnings per share was held back. However, earnings per share still grew 20 per cent in the half.

Operating profit margins, keenly watched by both the company and analysts, widened from 4.7 per cent to 6.4 per cent groupwide. In the UK, where most of the Harcros business is located, margins grew from 6.1 to 7.6 per cent.

Pre-tax profits were 62 per cent higher at £44.3 million for the six months to September 30. The interim dividend is 5p, up from 4.5p.

Tempus, page 32



Mixing it Alan Peterson, left, the chief executive, and John Edwards, finance director

### News Int nears Italy satellite TV deal

BY RAYMOND SNODDY MEDIA EDITOR

NEWS International, the UK media group, is expected to complete today a move into the Italian satellite television market in partnership with Telecom Italia.

Once the deal is signed, the aim is to submit a £2.5 billion (£1.51 billion) bid for Italian television football rights for a five-year period tomorrow.

Rupert Murdoch, chairman and chief executive of The News Corporation, parent company of News International, which owns *The Times*, is particularly keen to get into the Italian satellite market, one of the most under-developed in Europe.

The deal envisages Telecom Italia having a 51 per cent stake in the enlarged Stream venture which would broadcast 200 digital channels, including pay-per-view football. News International would have a 39 per cent stake and TF1, the French broadcaster, would have the remaining 10 per cent. Stream would compete directly with Telepiu, the digital broadcaster that is controlled by Canal Plus, the French subscription operator.

BSkyB, in which News International has a 40 per cent stake, has decided against direct involvement in the Italian venture.

### BUSINESS ROUNDUP

## Avalon suspended as loans are cut off

SHARES of Avalon Oil were suspended at 6p yesterday after the independent exploration and production company said that its loan facilities had been withdrawn. Avalon leaving it in a "precarious" financial position. Avalon said that it was taking legal advice and that it believed the action was in breach of the relevant loan agreement. The action was in breach of the relevant loan agreement. The Avalon's difficulties have been made worse by the current economic problems in Russia, which have paralysed the local banking system and made it impossible for Avalon to secure payments owed to it by Stimul, its joint venture partner in Russia. Avalon owns a 49 per cent stake in Stimul, a Russian joint stock company operating in Orenburg, southern Russia.

Earlier this month Avalon reported an interim operating loss of more than \$2 million (£1.21 million) for the six months to June 30, 1998. The company said that it had been affected by economic turmoil in Russia and falling oil prices, among other factors. Avalon shares, which trade on the Alternative Investment Market, peaked at 103½p immediately after its flotation in April 1997.

## Clyde Blowers offer

MANAGERS of Clyde Blowers are taking the specialist engineer private. Their £24.5 million offer for the company, announced yesterday, is worth 165p a share, a premium of 75 per cent to the price at which the shares traded before the bid approach was made public. Investors speaking for 42.8 per cent of the shares say that they intend to accept the offer. Shares of Clyde Blowers fell sharply after the company published disappointing half-year results in May this year and have failed to recover.

## Brammer falls short

BRAMMER, the industrial services group, yesterday said it expects full-year profits to "fall short of the current market consensus", causing its share price to plunge. Shares fell 63½p to 304p, before firming to close at 307½p. The company said that for the four months since the half year, UK distribution sales are 5.6 per cent down on last year, with October down 10 per cent. Brammer also announced that it had acquired a 25 per cent stake in Sociedade de Rolamentos, a Portuguese bearing distributor, for £320,000 in cash.

## Chase service retained

CHASE Global Investor Services, a subsidiary of Chase Manhattan, has been retained by the London Pensions Fund Authority after a review of custodial arrangements for investments totalling £2.4 billion. The LPPA is the successor body for the pension funds of the former Greater London Council and Inner London Education Authority. Chase, originally retained by the LPPA in 1991, provides safekeeping of assets, multi-currency settlement and reporting, investment accounting and securities lending for the whole fund.

## Ben Bailey fears

SHARES in Ben Bailey Construction fell sharply yesterday after the housebuilder said that its 1998 pre-tax profits would be below market expectations. Its share price touched a low of 52½p, from 65p the previous day. Ben Bailey said that, assuming there is no change in the climate before year-end, full-year profits to December 31 "should still represent growth of approximately 25 per cent over 1997". The company expects to maintain the final dividend. It said that performance had been hurt by delays in the sales of its Sovereign homes.

## European Motors issues warning

BY MATTHEW BARBOUR

SHARES in European Motor Holdings fell 10p to 54½p after the BMW, Mercedes and Jaguar dealer gave warning that full-year profits would fall short of expectations. The company yesterday re-

ported a fall in pre-tax profits to £5 million from £6.2 million for the six months to September 30 on turnover that fell to £233.8 million from £241.1 million. Earnings fell to 6.4p a share from 7.9p. The interim dividend is held at 2.6p a share.

Richard Palmer, chief executive, said trade had been adversely affected by weak consumer confidence, a change in the car registration system and high interest rates. As a result it was unlikely that full-year profits would match the £10.23 million reported for the

previous 12 months. The company announced that it was reviewing its operations with the aim of reducing costs. "When the economy turns, we hope to be in an excellent position to capitalise on any opportunities presented," Mr Palmer said.

## Macdonald finds little evidence of downturn

BY DOMINIC WALSH

MACDONALD HOTELS, the provincial hotel operator, yesterday attacked economic commentators for "peddling strife and doom and gloom" as the group reported an 18 per cent jump in half-year profits.

Donald Macdonald, chief executive, said bookings for the key Christmas period were 4 to 5 per cent up on a year ago, adding: "As we sit here, we don't see much evidence of a downturn." He said the gloomy prognosis of many observers was "in danger of becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy".

Pre-tax profits in the 26 weeks to September 27 rose from £5.56 million to £6.57 million after absorbing increased interest charges. Turnover was £28.4 million (£24.9 million). Earnings per share reached 8.4p (7.12p) and the interim payout rises to 1.82p (1.65p).

Average occupancy dipped to 66 per cent (67 per cent); a 9 per cent rise in the achieved room rate to £50.12 lifted the room yield 7 per cent to £33.11. Of the 25 hotels owned by Macdonald, 17 are four-star; it plans to upgrade six more from their current three-star standard. It is also in the process of adding to its 28 management contracts.

Asked if the group had received any approaches, Mr Macdonald said: "That's like asking a spinster that question. We would love to be courted but unfortunately we have not been." He denied implying that he was putting a "for sale" over the company, but added: "Shareholder value is what we focus on, not personal ego."

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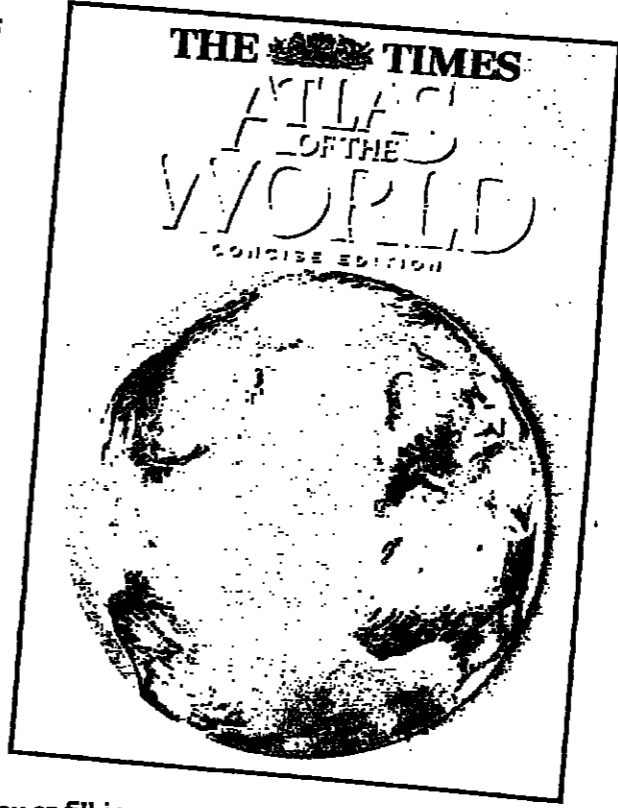
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ACCOUNTANCY

Revenue reform debate vital

John Avery Jones sees the need for a careful analysis of the proposals for a general anti-avoidance rule



John Avery Jones: "Taxpayers are put off by the state of the law"

Last month the Inland Revenue issued its long-awaited consultative document on a general anti-avoidance rule (GAAR) for direct taxes. Very properly this is a genuine and open consultation without any decisions having been taken already. I should like to examine the principle of such a statutory GAAR rather than the details of the proposals. The details are still recognisably those of the Tax Law Review Committee, which has not yet had an opportunity to consider the consultative document, but they have been tightened up. The policy case for a GAAR is that it is superior to the judge-made rules about avoidance in the first place when they started by construing tax legislation very formally last century, the judges invented an anti-avoidance doctrine in the 1980s that led to a much more realistic approach. Circular transactions were ignored completely; and so were inserted steps that had no real purpose apart from tax avoidance but the doctrine was not all-embracing. The doctrine has changed in the course of its evolution and may well change in the future. This approach creates uncertainty, is retrospective in its effect, and constitutes a rather surprising degree of judicial activity in an entirely statutory field like tax. How much better it would be if Parliament told the judges exactly what they should do, in a way that is not retrospective and is not capable of uncertain development in the future, especially if it is coupled with protection for taxpayers. I see considerable merit in these arguments, although they are rather spoilt, when one considers that the GAAR is to be restricted to companies, leaving the judges a free rein to continue to develop their doctrines for individuals and other classes of taxpayers, and, indeed, for companies as well. At present there is a fuzzy dividing line between whether a transaction is caught by the anti-avoidance doctrine or not because one never knows when the courts might change their approach. Under a GAAR there would be an even fuzziest dividing line, but in a different place. But there would be a clear line at the point at which one obtains a clearance. Because one can never define avoidance it is unthinkable that taxpayers should not be able to obtain clearances; they must still have the certainty that approved transactions are not caught. There would also be general clearances for some transactions in order for the Revenue to limit the number of applications for clearances. This clear dividing line would be a great advantage for taxpayers, at least so long as they are in a position to wait for the clearance, which is not always possible in commercial transactions. At present most taxpayers do not go anywhere near the different but fuzzy present line because they are put off by the uncertain state of the law, the cost, not only in money but in management time, of fighting the Revenue, and the fear of upsetting the Revenue. There would be no such concerns if the Revenue had blessed the transaction in advance. Might not a GAAR encourage all companies to avoid tax up to the new limits allowed by the clearance system? One might think that the Revenue's answer would be to be strict about giving clearances. But since it cannot afford to lose a case on the GAAR in court, at least in the early years of its existence, as its deterrent effect would be lost, it would actually have to be quite lenient about clearances. Looked at from the Revenue's point of view, the obvious advantage is that it would collect tax from transactions that it cannot tax at the moment. But the snag is that it would have to allocate say 100 (or it may be 200 for all I know) of its best people to man the clearance system when those people would be far better employed collecting tax. Might not the paradoxical result of a GAAR be more tax from the few but less tax from the many, coupled with the huge resource cost of running the clearance system? It is not therefore axiomatic that a GAAR is good for the Revenue and bad for taxpayers. This is an opportunity that must not be missed for a serious debate about the merits of GAAR. And please let us have an unemotional debate.

John Avery Jones is senior partner of Speechly Bircham and chairman of the Tax Law Review Committee

Human rights to keep 'the tax police' at bay

IT MAY seem far from home. But attitudes in Kazakhstan bring the latest legal changes and how they will affect taxation into sharp resolution. Stephen Oliver, the great and amiable president of the VAT Tribunals, was hauled out there to try to intervene and explain the concept of human rights to what is known in Kazakhstan as "the tax police". These people described by Oliver as "looking like gentlemen who had come in with Genghis Khan" were much given to kicking down the doors of oil executives and carting them off to the cells for 48 hours of questioning on the precise nature of transfer pricing. Oliver is a persuasive soul. But even he failed to make a lasting change. As one member of the tax police apparently told him: "We will still find it better to kick the country, as of last Thursday, has the Human Rights Act 1998 in force. And, to judge by the views expressed at a conference organised this week by TaxAid, the tax advice charity, it will have a profound effect on tax matters. It may even come to the aid of some of the concerns that Peter Wyman, the prominent tax partner with PricewaterhouseCoopers, voiced in last week's Philip Hardman memorial lecture. Wyman was keen to argue that uncertainty over disclosure requirements for tax returns put taxpayers in a grossly unfair position. He suggested that Hardman, the indignant Grant Thornton tax partner in whose memory the annual lecture is held, "would have been appalled at what appears to be the prevailing attitude in some quarters of the Treasury, the Inland Revenue and Customs and Excise to the effect that in order to protect the Exchequer from tax avoidance any means are justified even where ordinary people doing ordinary things are severely disadvantaged". Wyman's underlying theme was that "there needs to be a clear, and probably binding, accord on what constitutes proper disclosure". That would seem to be an unarguable right. But the tax authorities have always kept such areas deliberately con-

fused. It obviously suits their efforts to do so. But equally some of the examples that Wyman put forward could have seemed, to an ordinary onlooker, to be examples of taxpayers wanting to have their cake and eat it. Wyman's thesis was damaged by this. But his fundamental points still stood. "One aspect of certainty," he argued, "is knowing that once a tax return or computation has been agreed the resultant tax liability is determined for all time. The taxpayer therefore knows what he is due to pay and that is the end of the matter. However, if as a matter of almost routine, the position can then be reopened on 'discovery' that degree of certainty has gone and taxpayers are placed in an intolerable position." It is this concept of certainty that is going to crop up again and again as lawyers connect the effect of the new human rights legislation with issues of justice for taxpayers. "Every natural or legal person is entitled to the peaceful enjoyment of his possessions," says Article 1 of the First Protocol of the European Convention on Human Rights, and that principle is, as of last week, no longer a distant idea wrangled over in Strasbourg. It is now at the heart of UK law. As Francis Fitzpatrick, the barrister, put it at this week's conference, the idea of retrospective legislation, for example, will be seen as "particularly offensive" as it cuts away at the idea of certainty. It is not necessarily a breach of the Act but is viewed with considerable suspicion. As is the idea of prospective legislation. In future Chancellors of the Exchequer may find that floating ideas for the future via a Green Budget, for example, ends up engulfed in the courts on the grounds that it undermines legal certainty and the rule of law. The same goes for areas such as the recovery of overpaid tax and any Revenue policy of prosecution that is selective rather than universal. Ordinary citizens will be able to take to the courts to ensure that the tax authorities apply policies consistently and give the taxpayer certainty. None of this will make the tax gatherers' job any easier. They may agree wholeheartedly with the Lord Chancellor who characterised human rights law in 1950 as "some half-baked scheme to be administered by some unknown court". But for the rest of us it curbs the concept of "the tax police". No threat to our "peaceful enjoyment" will go unchallenged.



ROBERT BRUCE

Robert Bruce is a tax expert

What goes round comes round

THE proposed move of the £7 million audit of the Abbey National plus of PricewaterhouseCoopers to Deloitte & Touche has more than a touch of symmetry, some might even say Schadenfreude, about it. For years the audit of the Abbey National was carried out by the original Deloitte firm. But mergers came along. Around the world Deloitte merged with Touche Ross and became Deloitte & Touche. But in the UK the old firm

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

merged with Coopers, and the Abbey audit went along as well. But things did not go well. The mixing of Deloitte partners and Coopers partners turned into an acrimonious affair. Many Deloitte partners jumped, or were pushed. One such was Keith Woodley, a distinguished partner who was also one-time president of the English ICA. These days he finds himself chairman of the audit committee at

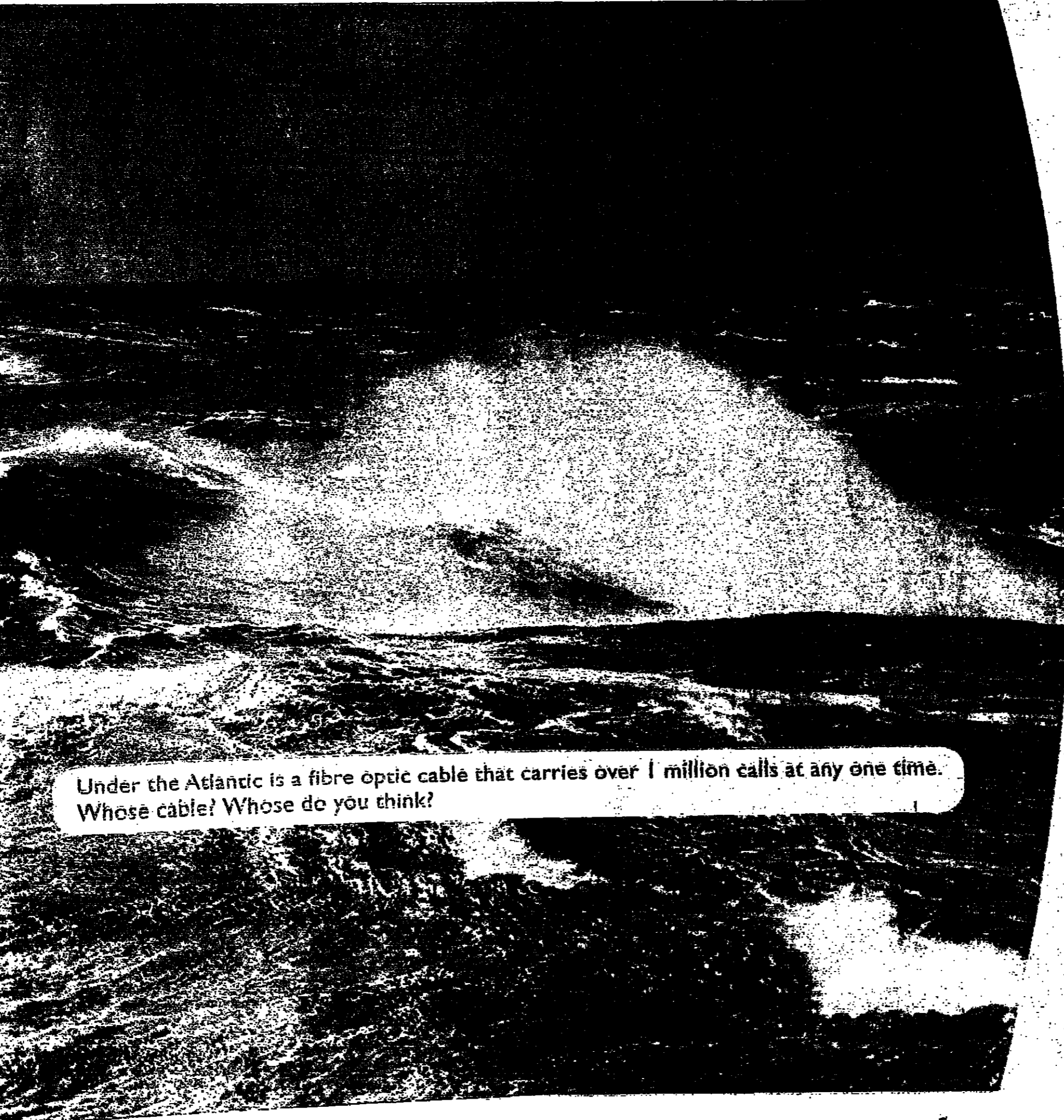
Abbey National. How pleasant, he must be thinking, to have been able to deliver the audit to the firm that now bears the Deloitte name. Focused group THEY don't make chartered accountants like they used to. The annual Hardman memorial lecture is always a time not only to deliver analytical thoughts on the subject of tax, but also to tell tales of the legendary Philip Hardman, of

Grant Thornton, whose memory is celebrated by the event. This year's lecture was given by Peter Wyman, tax partner with PricewaterhouseCoopers. Halfway through the event he startled the assembled hundreds by blowing a whistle as an aid to refocusing his audience's attention. Hardman, he recalled, had once adopted the same strategy. Except that he had used a gun and loosed it off at the ceiling.

Pathological

THE Treasury, in its enthusiasm for swingeing laws against tax avoidance, is prone to being infuriated by the habit of tax advisers of picking over the old bones of the law in an effort to find a loophole. Their suspicions can only be confirmed by a conference to be held at the end of the month. Entitled "Sophisticated Offshore Tax Planning Now", the afternoon seminar is to be held, significantly enough, at the Royal College of Pathologists.

ROBERT BRUCE



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# Gilts advance as equities fade

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## ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E
44.5	44.0	3000 Beers	44.5	+0.5	+1.1	18.5
41.5	41.0	3000 Brew	41.5	+0.5	+1.2	17.5
38.5	38.0	3000 Dist	38.5	+0.5	+1.3	16.5
35.5	35.0	3000 Equip	35.5	+0.5	+1.4	15.5
32.5	32.0	3000 Equip	32.5	+0.5	+1.5	14.5
29.5	29.0	3000 Equip	29.5	+0.5	+1.6	13.5
26.5	26.0	3000 Equip	26.5	+0.5	+1.7	12.5
23.5	23.0	3000 Equip	23.5	+0.5	+1.8	11.5
20.5	20.0	3000 Equip	20.5	+0.5	+1.9	10.5

## BANKS

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E
15.5	15.0	1000 Bank	15.5	+0.5	+3.2	12.5
14.5	14.0	1000 Bank	14.5	+0.5	+3.4	11.5
13.5	13.0	1000 Bank	13.5	+0.5	+3.7	10.5
12.5	12.0	1000 Bank	12.5	+0.5	+4.0	9.5
11.5	11.0	1000 Bank	11.5	+0.5	+4.3	8.5
10.5	10.0	1000 Bank	10.5	+0.5	+4.8	7.5
9.5	9.0	1000 Bank	9.5	+0.5	+5.3	6.5
8.5	8.0	1000 Bank	8.5	+0.5	+5.9	5.5
7.5	7.0	1000 Bank	7.5	+0.5	+6.7	4.5
6.5	6.0	1000 Bank	6.5	+0.5	+7.7	3.5

## BREWERIES, PUBS & REST

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E
18.5	18.0	1000 Brew	18.5	+0.5	+2.7	14.5
17.5	17.0	1000 Brew	17.5	+0.5	+2.9	13.5
16.5	16.0	1000 Brew	16.5	+0.5	+3.1	12.5
15.5	15.0	1000 Brew	15.5	+0.5	+3.3	11.5
14.5	14.0	1000 Brew	14.5	+0.5	+3.5	10.5
13.5	13.0	1000 Brew	13.5	+0.5	+3.7	9.5
12.5	12.0	1000 Brew	12.5	+0.5	+4.0	8.5
11.5	11.0	1000 Brew	11.5	+0.5	+4.3	7.5
10.5	10.0	1000 Brew	10.5	+0.5	+4.6	6.5
9.5	9.0	1000 Brew	9.5	+0.5	+5.0	5.5

## DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E
25.5	25.0	1000 Ind	25.5	+0.5	+2.0	18.5
24.5	24.0	1000 Ind	24.5	+0.5	+2.1	17.5
23.5	23.0	1000 Ind	23.5	+0.5	+2.2	16.5
22.5	22.0	1000 Ind	22.5	+0.5	+2.3	15.5
21.5	21.0	1000 Ind	21.5	+0.5	+2.4	14.5
20.5	20.0	1000 Ind	20.5	+0.5	+2.5	13.5
19.5	19.0	1000 Ind	19.5	+0.5	+2.6	12.5
18.5	18.0	1000 Ind	18.5	+0.5	+2.7	11.5
17.5	17.0	1000 Ind	17.5	+0.5	+2.8	10.5
16.5	16.0	1000 Ind	16.5	+0.5	+2.9	9.5

## ELECTRICITY

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E
12.5	12.0	1000 Elec	12.5	+0.5	+4.0	8.5
11.5	11.0	1000 Elec	11.5	+0.5	+4.3	7.5
10.5	10.0	1000 Elec	10.5	+0.5	+4.8	6.5
9.5	9.0	1000 Elec	9.5	+0.5	+5.3	5.5
8.5	8.0	1000 Elec	8.5	+0.5	+5.9	4.5
7.5	7.0	1000 Elec	7.5	+0.5	+6.7	3.5
6.5	6.0	1000 Elec	6.5	+0.5	+7.7	2.5
5.5	5.0	1000 Elec	5.5	+0.5	+9.1	1.5
4.5	4.0	1000 Elec	4.5	+0.5	+11.0	0.5
3.5	3.0	1000 Elec	3.5	+0.5	+14.3	-0.5

## ELECTRONIC & ELECT

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E
15.5	15.0	1000 Elec	15.5	+0.5	+3.2	12.5
14.5	14.0	1000 Elec	14.5	+0.5	+3.4	11.5
13.5	13.0	1000 Elec	13.5	+0.5	+3.7	10.5
12.5	12.0	1000 Elec	12.5	+0.5	+4.0	9.5
11.5	11.0	1000 Elec	11.5	+0.5	+4.3	8.5
10.5	10.0	1000 Elec	10.5	+0.5	+4.6	7.5
9.5	9.0	1000 Elec	9.5	+0.5	+5.0	6.5
8.5	8.0	1000 Elec	8.5	+0.5	+5.5	5.5
7.5	7.0	1000 Elec	7.5	+0.5	+6.1	4.5
6.5	6.0	1000 Elec	6.5	+0.5	+6.9	3.5

## CHEMICALS

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E
18.5	18.0	1000 Chem	18.5	+0.5	+2.7	14.5
17.5	17.0	1000 Chem	17.5	+0.5	+2.9	13.5
16.5	16.0	1000 Chem	16.5	+0.5	+3.1	12.5
15.5	15.0	1000 Chem	15.5	+0.5	+3.3	11.5
14.5	14.0	1000 Chem	14.5	+0.5	+3.5	10.5
13.5	13.0	1000 Chem	13.5	+0.5	+3.7	9.5
12.5	12.0	1000 Chem	12.5	+0.5	+4.0	8.5
11.5	11.0	1000 Chem	11.5	+0.5	+4.3	7.5
10.5	10.0	1000 Chem	10.5	+0.5	+4.6	6.5
9.5	9.0	1000 Chem	9.5	+0.5	+5.0	5.5

## ENGINEERING

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E
12.5	12.0	1000 Eng	12.5	+0.5	+4.0	8.5
11.5	11.0	1000 Eng	11.5	+0.5	+4.3	7.5
10.5	10.0	1000 Eng	10.5	+0.5	+4.8	6.5
9.5	9.0	1000 Eng	9.5	+0.5	+5.3	5.5
8.5	8.0	1000 Eng	8.5	+0.5	+5.9	4.5
7.5	7.0	1000 Eng	7.5	+0.5	+6.7	3.5
6.5	6.0	1000 Eng	6.5	+0.5	+7.7	2.5
5.5	5.0	1000 Eng	5.5	+0.5	+9.1	1.5
4.5	4.0	1000 Eng	4.5	+0.5	+11.0	0.5
3.5	3.0	1000 Eng	3.5	+0.5	+14.3	-0.5

## CONSTRUCTION

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E
15.5	15.0	1000 Const	15.5	+0.5	+3.2	12.5
14.5	14.0	1000 Const	14.5	+0.5	+3.4	11.5
13.5	13.0	1000 Const	13.5	+0.5	+3.7	10.5
12.5	12.0	1000 Const	12.5	+0.5	+4.0	9.5
11.5	11.0	1000 Const	11.5	+0.5	+4.3	8.5
10.5	10.0	1000 Const	10.5	+0.5	+4.6	7.5
9.5	9.0	1000 Const	9.5	+0.5	+5.0	6.5
8.5	8.0	1000 Const	8.5	+0.5	+5.5	5.5
7.5	7.0	1000 Const	7.5	+0.5	+6.1	4.5
6.5	6.0	1000 Const	6.5	+0.5	+6.9	3.5

## DISTRIBUTORS

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E
12.5	12.0	1000 Dist	12.5	+0.5	+4.0	8.5
11.5	11.0	1000 Dist	11.5	+0.5	+4.3	7.5
10.5	10.0	1000 Dist	10.5	+0.5	+4.8	6.5
9.5	9.0	1000 Dist	9.5	+0.5	+5.3	5.5
8.5	8.0	1000 Dist	8.5	+0.5	+5.9	4.5
7.5	7.0	1000 Dist	7.5	+0.5	+6.7	3.5
6.5	6.0	1000 Dist	6.5	+0.5	+7.7	2.5
5.5	5.0	1000 Dist	5.5	+0.5	+9.1	1.5
4.5	4.0	1000 Dist	4.5	+0.5	+11.0	0.5
3.5	3.0	1000 Dist	3.5	+0.5	+14.3	-0.5

## ENGINEERING VEHICLES

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E
15.5	15.0	1000 Veh	15.5	+0.5	+3.2	12.5
14.5	14.0	1000 Veh	14.5	+0.5	+3.4	11.5
13.5	13.0	1000 Veh	13.5	+0.5	+3.7	10.5
12.5	12.0	1000 Veh	12.5	+0.5	+4.0	9.5
11.5	11.0	1000 Veh	11.5	+0.5	+4.3	8.5
10.5	10.0	1000 Veh	10.5	+0.5	+4.6	7.5
9.5	9.0	1000 Veh	9.5	+0.5	+5.0	6.5
8.5	8.0	1000 Veh	8.5	+0.5	+5.5	5.5
7.5	7.0	1000 Veh	7.5	+0.5	+6.1	4.5
6.5	6.0	1000 Veh	6.5	+0.5	+6.9	3.5

## ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E
44.5	44.0	3000 Beers	44.5	+0.5	+1.1	18.5
41.5	41.0	3000 Brew	41.5	+0.5	+1.2	17.5
38.5	38.0	3000 Dist	38.5	+0.5	+1.3	16.5
35.5	35.0	3000 Equip	35.5	+0.5	+1.4	15.5
32.5	32.0	3000 Equip	32.5	+0.5	+1.5	14.5
29.5	29.0	3000 Equip	29.5	+0.5	+1.6	13.5
26.5	26.0	3000 Equip	26.5	+0.5	+1.7	12.5
23.5	23.0	3000 Equip	23.5	+0.5	+1.8	11.5
20.5	20.0	3000 Equip	20.5	+0.5	+1.9	10.5

## BANKS

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E
15.5	15.0	1000 Bank	15.5	+0.5	+3.2	12.5
14.5	14.0	1000 Bank	14.5	+0.5	+3.4	11.5
13.5	13.0	1000 Bank	13.5	+0.5	+3.7	10.5
12.5	12.0	1000 Bank	12.5	+0.5	+4.0	9.5
11.5	11.0	1000 Bank	11.5	+0.5	+4.3	8.5
10.5	10.0	1000 Bank	10.5	+0.5	+4.6	7.5
9.5	9.0	1000 Bank	9.5	+0.5	+5.0	6.5
8.5	8.0	1000 Bank	8.5	+0.5	+5.5	5.5
7.5	7.0	1000 Bank	7.5	+0.5	+6.1	4.5
6.5	6.0	1000 Bank	6.5	+0.5	+6.9	3.5

## BREWERIES, PUBS & REST

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E
18.5	18.0	1000 Brew	18.5	+0.5	+2.7	14.5
17.5	17.0	1000 Brew	17.5	+0.5	+2.9	13.5
16.5	16.0	1000 Brew	16.5	+0.5	+3.1	12.5
15.5	15.0	1000 Brew	15.5	+0.5	+3.3	11.5
14.5	14.0	1000 Brew	14.5	+0.5	+3.5	10.5
13.5	13.0	1000 Brew	13.			





NEW VIDEOS  
Boorman's *The General* hits the small screen  
PAGE 42

# THE TIMES ARTS

POP  
Pulp, back on form and back on the road  
PAGE 43



NEW MOVIES: Geoff Brown peers through the pretentious fug surrounding *Ronin* to discover... not very much

## De Niro up a bland alley

Ominous characters are brought together in Paris by a brisk young lady with an Irish accent. A deadly mission is afoot. "There are some people," Natascha McElhone says, "who have something that we require." Who is she? What people? And what is the something? Mum's the word in *Ronin*, an action thriller that tries to cloak its old-fashioned ingredients in a cloud of enigma. All we are initially told is that the people are "very unpleasant", and that the something is contained in a silver case, closely guarded. As a call to arms this would not satisfy me, but it suits the task force, six in number and all perfect strangers. Robert De Niro, a shady American, arrives on the job in a peaked cap and a rain-soaked mac. Shady Frenchman Jean Reno prefers stubble and a woolly cap. Stellan Skarsgård, an electronics whiz from the old Eastern bloc, skulks in the background. Sean Bean, a weapons adviser, exits early after being throttled by De Niro. Once money has been talked, the remainder set off, guns loaded, car with a full

tank, ready for heavy-duty action under the direction of John Frankenheimer. There have been few chances for him to whip up a good chase since *The French Connection II*, 23 years ago. But he makes amends here. After a dust-up on the banks of the Seine, pursuers and pursued shift to the Riviera. Cars roar down narrow Nice streets. Back in Paris, vehicles collide in the sort of tunnel where Diana, Princess of Wales, met her fate. Aside from that sequence's unwelcome overtones, action scenes are dilligently handled and pleasant enough, with squealing tyres, bursting flames; you know the sort of stuff. But a large gulf separates what is on the screen from the pretensions inside the filmmakers' heads. The title itself suggests higher things, with its reference to the legend of the Japanese *ronin* — samurai forced by their masters' deaths to become bandits or swords for hire. Not content with a Japanese title, the film aims for a vaguely European air, filling its script with mysteries and lurking betrayals, stamping its characters' faces with



Caught up in an enigma with precious few variations, Robert De Niro tries to shoot himself out of the trouble that John Frankenheimer has landed him in, in the thriller *Ronin*

the cold glare of disillusion. You think of the films of Jean-Pierre Melville, and Alain Delon in *Le Samouraï*. In practice, De Niro and company carry no symbolic weight. They are just sketchily developed types who run around France without enough reason, trying to snatch a silver case from the Russian Mafia. With a stronger script, the actors could take their characters to interesting places, but they remain tied down to the shallow thoughts compiled by J.D. Zeik and a pseudonymous David Mamet.

A lack of fresh excitement also dogs *Les Misérables*. This is "Les Mis" without the music: expensive plans to film Cameron Mackintosh's hit musical, first mooted a decade ago, remain unfulfilled. But no one needs to pay Victor Hugo for his novel, so the way was clear for Mandalay Entertainment to wheel out Valjean, the wronged convict seeking redemption; Javert, the police inspector who refuses to let bygones be bygones; and the rest of the characters culled from the book's 1,200 pages by screenwriter Rafael Yglesias.

Roman Polanski launched the project (filmed largely in Prague). Then, when he shuffled off elsewhere, Bille August came in to direct a cast including Liam Neeson, Geoffrey Rush, Uma Thurman, Claire Danes, massed Czech extras and that waddling flock of geese without whom no movie village appears complete. As an international, English-language venture, *Les Misérables* is certainly more sensible than either *The House of the Spirits* or *Smilla's Sense of Snow*, although it never hits the artistic heights.

Neeson, oddly, is one of the disappointments. He has no trouble conveying Valjean's looming presence, but the flames of injustice that burn within too often produce a pained look that suggests only indignation. So the way is clear for Rush to dominate with his sly and persistent Javert: no straightforward ogre, this, but a man eating himself up with revenge, as much a haunted loner as Valjean, his prey. Thurman (as the ill-fated Fantine) copes well with the unfamiliar task of looking bedraggled and miserable. Claire Danes (her adolescent daughter Cosette) hardly suits 19th-century France, but modern young audiences should cheer her secret love affair with the student Marius that rounds off the last few reels.

pitched throughout at a level of stately delirium. Consider the visuals, masterminded by the director, King Vidor. Every skyscraper becomes a phallic symbol, every encounter a sexual ballet played out in grandiose offices and bedrooms. But *The Fountainhead* is not just stylistic hot air. It also fascinates because a real architect, the imperious Frank Lloyd Wright, lay behind the Cooper character, and both the interior sets and building projects were deliberately designed as Wright pastiches. *The Fountainhead* fancifully assumed that architectural matters could stir a wide public to frenzy. It did not in 1948, nor does it now, but all the debates over form and function certainly add extra interest to this bizarre film.

With *Rounders*, the latest from director John Dahl, most of the interest lies in the background details: from the seedy New York bars where law student Matt Damon obsessively plays poker, to the supporting characters that seem so much livelier than Damon himself. "Want a cookie?" John Malkovich asks, disguised as a Russian cardsharp. Edward Norton sparks further interest as Damon's friend Worm, whose reckless gambling leaves them both with impossible debts.

Nowhere, though, in this dutiful amalgam of scenes and images is there any creative audacity. For that, you must visit *The Fountainhead*, 50 years old and a film rather easier to appreciate now than it seemed in 1948. Then, critics poured scorn on the verbiage floating from the mouths of Gary Cooper, Raymond Massey and Patricia Neal, the visionary architect, newspaper tycoon and prickly heiress locked in a tussle between individualism and the collective will. Now the excesses of Ayn Rand's story and dialogue take their place in a film

But Damon's Mike is just a dull sap, pushed and pulled by those around: not someone you take to heart. For Dahl, too, this is a disappointing venture: the widescreen imagery may be alluring, but he seems to have mislaid the bite of his earlier thrillers. *The Eel* is a wayward film by the Japanese veteran Shohei Imamura. A man (Koji Yashuto, from *Shall We Dance?*) is paroled after serving time for stabbing his wife. He runs a barber shop; he talks to his pet eel. Imamura, an astute observer of the Japanese scene, creates a humane portrait of the community clustered round the shop, although he puts the film in jeopardy with awkward injections of melodrama and farcical comedy. Surprisingly, the film shared the Palme d'Or at Cannes last year. The week also brings *Angel Sharks*, a flashy French film about teenagers living for the moment on the Riviera. Manuel Pradal, a first-time director, has a strong visual eye, although he pushes his concern for the striking image to the point of narrative incoherence. No fancy sights adorn the last of the week's pile, the American indie *Dead Man's Curve*: the writer-director Dan Rosen concentrates instead on black comedy dialogue and recycled motifs from past campus shockers such as *Scream*. It passes muster.

### 'Nice car chases'

Every week, young film fans discuss the latest releases...

■ **RONIN**  
Charlotte Dalley, 19: Nice car chases, but very little else to recommend it. Natascha McElhone was the film's only saving grace.  
Leslie Isaiah Thomas, 20: If action is your thing, this is for you. If you prefer slow and thoughtful, stay away.  
Carl Clark, 19: An enthralling piece of nonsense. Some of the best action sequences I've seen.  
Alison Juliard, 20: If I'd seen just one more car chase, I'd have screamed.

■ **ROUNDERS**  
Charlotte: Easily the best film released this week. Edge-of-the-seat stuff.  
Leslie: Enjoyable, but lacking in tension.  
Carl: Matt Damon was excellent. He portrayed the life of a gambler really well.

### SNAP VERDICT

Alison: All the actors are electrifying.  
■ **LES MISÉRABLES**  
Charlotte: It will make you feel depressed, perhaps because it's a little too true to the novel.  
Leslie: An old-fashioned kind of movie that will probably be appreciated by the more mature cinemagoer. Not a patch on the musical.  
Carl: I thought it was dull and sombre. Desperately in need of some songs.  
Alison: It just didn't work, which was a shame because the actors were all brilliant.

The New Thriller from the Director of 'The Last Seduction'

MATT DAMON EDWARD NORTON

"Rounders marks a return to form for director John Dahl... poised, polished... a joy to behold" — THE INDEPENDENT

JOHN TURTURRO FANKE JANSSEN GRETCHEN MOL WITH JOHN MALKOVICH AND MARTIN LANDAU

# ROUNDERS

FROM TOMORROW AT CINEMAS NATIONWIDE

EVERYBODY LOVES JOE!

"TAKE THAT HOLLYWOOD, RIGHT IN THE BALLS!"

"SUPERB"

A film directed by Ken Loach

## My name is Joe

"EXCEPTIONAL"

"MAGNIFICENT"

"WONDERFUL"

"RIVETING"

"All other British cinema this year just seems like candyfloss"

Now Showing

ABC Ritzy And Scotland Starts tomorrow CHELSEA CINEMA And across the country

مكتبة من الأصل

Russian  
Bobbing for  
Surprise and tha



# Russians in a fine rage

There you are, a nice young woman roaming Robin Don's s.t. which oddly but enterprisingly combines a rough timber walkway with the dune of an old Russian church. In glides a lady in furs and silks, accompanied by footmen. And does this genteel stranger give you a friendly greeting? No, she instantly tells you to forget all pleasure because "there is an endless eternal fire and you will burn in it". And off she shimmers, smiling the serene smile of the justified.

Welcome to Kalinovo, Ostrovsky's capsule version of the towns he visited on a field-trip down the Volga in 1856. It is a

## THEATRE The Storm Almeida

place where tradition is so oppressive, a sort of home-grown Calvinism so ingrained, fatalism so absolute, the distance between rich and poor so extreme, that the plays of Ibsen, who began writing about the same time, seem cheerful by comparison and those of Chekhov positively larky.

The ecology of such places is, of course, friendly to tyrants of both the economic and moral varieties; and Ostrovsky gives us one of each. The merchant Dikoi (bug-eyed, bushy-bearded Sylvester Morand) is a bully, forever raging at some down-trodden workman or maybe his nephew Boris (Richard Lynch), who is hopelessly awaiting a legacy his grandmother left him. And Kabanova (Maggie Steed) is a merchant's widow and a mother-in-law beyond the power of even Bernard Manning to vilify. If her son Tikhon (Paul Hilton) fails to honour her enough, or refuses to treat his wife Katya (Susan Lynch) with sufficient contempt, she takes it as proof that God's cosmos is being dismantled by the younger generation.

Ostrovsky's way of giving this static situation a dramatic shake-up is a bit predictable. While Tikhon gratefully escapes on a boozey business trip, Katya and Boris succumb romantically and (it seems) even physically to each other. But what follows is more striking. Katya is enough of a Kalinovan not just to launch into demented confessions of guilt and distraught monologues la-



Adultery ahead: Paul Hilton (Tikhon) and Susan Lynch (Katya) as the husband and wife in trouble in *The Storm*

menting the fact that Russians no longer execute adulteresses, but — well, I must not reveal a denouement which those with a taste for grim Volgan endings should relish.

Actually, I would recommend a visit to Hettie Macdonald's staging in spite of everything: the melodrama, the thin love-plot, the symbolic thun-

derclaps, the improbably decent *raisonneur* who keeps interjecting editorialising remarks about the joylessness of provincial Russia. Though Lynch catches Katya's dreamy vulnerability, her despair lacks harshness and depth, and, though Maggie Steed looks and sounds baleful, a hint of Widow Twankey under-

mines her menace. But thanks largely to Frank McGuinness's robust translation, you cannot miss Ostrovsky's generosity of spirit or the size of his indignation.

Forty years after the piece's premiere, British dramatists were still damning women who rebelled against the day's sexual orthodoxies. Ostrovsky

# Surfeit of saccharin

Compilation shows are not my favourite cup of nostalgia, but if the songs really meant something to me first time round then Proust's maledictive effect starts to operate, and that gives a good feeling for a time. Otherwise there's enjoyment when the lyrics come laced with wit and verbal complexity. But the prospect of a string of songs knitted together from a string of shows, like this one from the musicals of Jerry Herman, promises a rapid evening and generally delivers it.

If happy days were tied up for me with memories of *Hello, Dolly!* or *Mame* with *Wack and Mabel* or *La Cage aux Folles*, for all of which Herman wrote music and lyrics, these 43 numbers, at just under three minutes per song, might have turned the time lost listening to them into time well spent. Led by the strong-voiced Kathryn Evans, the six singers, one of them also the pianist, can be likeable enough, and in the sadly few songs where the tone is tart it is pleasant to hear disgruntlement set to rhyme.

But the prevailing tone is remorselessly optimistic. Amazingly, nobody actually calls upon us in so many words to Look Upon The Bright Side, but this is the mood conveyed by the great preponderance of the ditties. Early on we are



A chorus to disapprove of the tone is remorselessly upbeat

## The Best of Times Vaudeville

told we should whistle when we feel no one is near, that a touch of mascara can help us to cope again, there's hope again, that we should tap our troubles away, that as long as we are dancing the world will dance along. On it goes. The pianist promises us a happy ending, and when it comes, with a dash of "Ma-ame!", a splash of "Hello-o-o-o, Dolly!" little lights chase each other around the arches like bright mice.

Obviously there's nothing actually wrong with this atti-

tude to the speck of earth we call home, and most American musicals include a song where somebody down on his luck pulls himself up by his bootstraps and behold, the straps are made of gold. But in quantity it's just too sweet and creamy.

A relief therefore to watch Garth Bardsley lean against a silver crescent and confide that the man in the moon is a lady — "The cow who jumped over cried 'Jumping Jehovah!'" — or hear Lindsay Hamilton give us Jeanette MacDonald's revenge on boring old Nelson Eddy. There is garlic in the cream, hooray.

JEREMY KINGSTON

## Stylish spot of delusion

### Twelfth Night Sheffield Crucible

wallows in lute music and indulges in homoerotic flamenco with his servants.

Shipwrecked on Christopher Oram's expensive-looking floorboards, *Susannah Hitching's* Viola promptly falls for this inflated ego. But disguised as a man, Cesario, and sent to woo on Orsino's behalf, she inadvertently wins Olivia for herself. If anything, Hermione Gulliford's Olivia wears her resistance too lightly. Viola's dig, "Lady, you are the cruellest she alive," sounds almost gratuitous after her alter-ego has just skewered Olivia's heart on the

chaise longue. Hitching's performance, however, is as much a gem as Sinclair's Malvolio.

It's left to Jeremy Clyde's bibulous Toby Belch and Una Stubbs's housekeeper Maria to hammer in the comic rivets. There's something distinctly odd about watching two middle-aged actors acting like unreconstructed Oxbridge students. But it works. For sheer comic opportunism, Clyde's louche playboy leaves Nicholas Rowe's added Aguecheek blinking in the stalls. I never realised what a show-stealing part this is. Similarly Stubbs, with her pert little poses and Mary Poppins chorline, brings a whole new meaning to blue-stocking housekeepers.

It is Ian Bartholomew's clown Peste who sounds the most melancholic notes. Bald and baggy in a giant green bath towel, he pads about like a medieval juke box, bamboozling characters with inscrutable jokes. That it all seems to make perfect sense is perhaps the grandest illusion of all.

JAMES CHRISTOPHER

# Bobbing for Irish apples

Belfast these days has two new tower blocks from which to view the city's expansion into the distant hills of Antrim. With the logo of a telephone company and an American hotel chain high on its smoky skyline, the city seems set for the economic mainstream.

This year's Belfast Festival displays similar high-flying aspirations, with its *Big Apple-First Bites* programme featuring work from a long list of New Yorkers, including Trisha Brown, Bill Viola, David Byrne, Robert Wilson and Philip Glass.

*Big Apple-First Bites* provided the extraordinary opportunity to see Saratoga International Theatre Institute's *Bob* alongside a lecture from Wilson that amounted to a "real-life" version of the stage show. The one-man show *Bob* was created from a series of interviews in which director and stage artist Wilson expounds his views on art, life and America.

STI director Anne Bogart, together with performer Will Bond, have created something, however, that leaves pedagogy far behind. Their brand of theatre involves a kind of slow-motion dance without music, marrying sound, light, voice and body work to give an absorbing account of even Wilson's most rarefied ideas.

So when Wilson himself strolled on to the stage of the Lyric to lead his audience through *An Evening With Robert Wilson*, he had the unenviable job of living up to Bond's version of him. Where Wilson's charisma is slightly frightening, Bond's is wholly seductive. Bond is also, oddly enough, better at speaking about Wilson's work than the man himself, even though what he has to say is confined entirely to the director's words.

But Bond offers something more substantial than an avant-garde Rory Brem-

er. His performance seems almost to work against Wilson's creed of keeping things slow and tightly focused. While Bond speaks, in Wilson's words, about moving at a snail's pace in order to experience more, his own work rate leaves sweat cascading from his cropped scalp.

David Pownall's latest, *Getting the Picture* (Lyric), might have benefited greatly

### BELFAST FESTIVAL

from a Robert Wilson setting. Pownall's is a fascinating script, sharply prodding notions of image and reality, history and myth. Unfortunately this too often flat-footed production, directed by Eoin O'Callaghan and designed by Will Hargreaves, seems to take entirely the wrong tack. Andrew Jackson, the seventh President of the United States, had his roots in the Ulster town of Carrickfergus. As such, it seemed reasonable to members of the Irish freedom movement that he should support their cause. Over many years, however, Jackson refused. Pownall's play concerns the efforts of an Irishwoman, Sorcha Kinlock (Jasmine Russell), finally to convince the dying ex-President, now retired to his slave-worked plantation, that he has a duty to the old country.

Kinlock arrives at Jackson's estate at the same time as Mathew Brady, a photographer who has come to take what he expects to be the final photograph of Jackson. Through this fortunate congregation, Pownall gets at the precarious business of image-making in the figurative and literal sense. But while the text offers a shifting pattern of truth and fiction, idealism and pragma-

tism, the production entirely lacks the finesse to make the best of it, offering lumpy settings and heavy-handed projection effects where something far less explicit was certainly called for.

Performances, however, help to compensate for the unsympathetic setting. Russell is taut and efficient as the gamine Irish patriot, while Micala McBrien's painfully self-confident Brady is equally precise. Chris Crooks offers a commanding centre to the piece. Full of wrath stymied only by flagging energy levels, his Jackson, while distinctly unlikeable, is entirely convincing as a character hard and vain enough to dent history.

A lesson in Irish drama as well as Irish history is on offer in *Field Day* and *Tinderbox* theatre companies' new version of Stewart Parker's Northern Star, staged in the resonant Belfast location of the First Presbyterian Church. Parker's play tells the story of the United Irishmen's leader Henry Joy McCracken by plundering and lampooning the entire history of Irish drama from Farquhar to Wilde and Behan. A day out in the Antrim hills is morphed into a wander through the Ireland of John Millington Synge, while McCracken's comic encounter with a bedraggled peasant is conducted in the stilted Hiberno-English pidgin of Boucicault's *Colleen Bawn*.

The humour of Parker's ideas has not always emerged as clearly as it does under Stephen Rea's fluid but focused direction. An excellent cast moves agilely around both church and text, while Conleth Hill manages to suggest some of McCracken's charisma even as the doctored hero frens himself inexorably towards the gallows.

LUKE CLANCY

HAVING a spare moment this morning between bath and breakfast, you pressed a hand against an outside wall and detected rising damp. Sell the home? Ring a cowboy? Burst into tears? Nah! Instead you correctly turned to that chap who writes about radio in *The Times*.

The thing about rising damp is that it does not exist, so there. I know this because Radio 4, so often accused of being predictable since the April revamp, does in fact still have plenty of those moments when the listener receives a splash from the fountain of knowledge.

*Room for Improvement* (Sundays) is presented with panache and intelligence by Lawrie Taylor. It has nothing to do with decorating unless you count decorating the intellect. The programme attracts guests who know how to think and how to articulate

# Surprise, surprise and thank you

### RADIO

ideas which seek to explain our behaviour in all manner of activities. But sometimes the best bits are brief interviews with people who have contacted the programme.

Thus we heard on Sunday from Jeff Howell, a writer who used to be in the building trade, though clearly not the sort of builder who will start the job three months next Wednesday and finish it soon after your grandchildren have inherited the property, weather permitting. Howell is a gem. He has done research, written learned papers. He said that those doggy characters who come around pressing meters up against your walls to prove that damp is racing upwards are likely to be talking, cr. rot.

prizes continue. Just when you thought the Prison Service was getting to grips with its problems, along comes an excellent documentary series that suggests there is still some way to go. *Managing Life* (Radio 4, Mondays) is the product of several months spent by Ed Stark getting to know the inmates of Glenochil Jail in Scotland. All the prisoners interviewed are serving life sentences for murder.

The surprise here was ordinariness and vulnerability. These men are mostly first-time offenders with no knowledge or understanding of the criminal milieu in which they find themselves. We heard from inmates struggling with remorse who dare not show their feelings for fear of appearing weak. Informative, interesting, surprising. More please.

PETER BARNARD

"STYLISH AND ENGROSSING"  
"EXQUISITELY ACTED" "FIRST RATE"  
"THE MOST STUNNING PRODUCTION TO DATE OF THIS CLASSIC EPIC"  
"★★★★★ STORMING... A MUST SEE FILM"  
LIAM NEESON  
GEOFFREY RUSH UMA THURMAN CLAIRE DANES  
LES MISERABLES  
THE LEGEND COMES TO LIFE.  
AT CINEMAS NATIONWIDE FROM TOMORROW

RYBODY LOVES JOE  
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MAYN HALLS  
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WAGNER  
WOLFE



LISTINGS

Last bow for Hall and Co?

ARTS

NEW CLASSICAL CDS
Schnittke discoveries

Lid off the Irish underworld

RECOMMENDED TODAY

Guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Marti Hargie

LONDON

KAFKA'S DICK: Alan Bennett's anti-biography...
LONDON PHILHARMONIC: Kurt Masur, the orchestra's dynamic principal conductor...



Kurt Masur leads the LPO at the Festival Hall

CHOIR OF CLARE COLLEGE: Past and present members of the chapel choir team up with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment...

ELSEWHERE: HUDDERSFIELD: A play by Luca Formis...
NORWICH: The versatile musician and composer Douglas Slater and his band Human Chain...

NEW WEST END SHOWS: Jeremy Kingston's choice of theatre shows in London

THE BEST OF TIMES: The Bridwell Theatre's programme of Jerry Herman songs...

GUIDING STAR: Jonathan Harvey's Hillborough aftermath play...

INTO THE WOODS: Sondhe's wonderfully nightmarish take on favourite fairy tales...

LITTLE MALCOLM AND HIS STRUGGLE AGAINST THE MACHINES: Denis Lawson directs his nephew Ewan McGregor...

THE STORM: Susan Lynch, Maggie Steed, Tom Markey in a revival of Ostrovsky's 1859 drama...

FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE: Geoff Brown's choice of the latest movies

NEW RELEASES: BLADE (18): Extravagant, jumbled horror fantasy...

THE ODD COUPLE (15): Mildly amusing but unnecessary sequel...

CURRENT: ANTEZ (PG): Neurotic art finds himself a war hero...

THE EXORCIST (18): The Devil takes possession of 14-year-old Linda Blair...

INDOMINA (15): Homicide cop with trapeze nerves tries to solve a teenage girl's murder...

LEFT LUGGAGE (PG): Superficial and unbelievable drama about coming to terms with the Holocaust...

NEW ON VIDEO

THE GENERAL: WARNER, 15, 1998. JOHN BOORMAN'S best film in years...

AFTERGLOW: Columbia TriStar, 15, 1997. JULIE CHRISTIE won an Oscar nomination...

BREAKDOWN: Fox Pathe, 15, 1997. KURT RUSSELL'S vehicle conks out on a deserted highway...

DARTHA AND LEENT FRANK: MANTHA - MEET FRANK. Film Four, 15, 1998. THREE male London friends become entangled with the same American girl...

SANSHO DAYU: BFI, PG, 1954. AS IN all late films by the Japanese master Kenji Mizoguchi...



Hell's angels: Brendan Gleeson and Adrian Dunbar in John Boorman's powerful recent film of organised thuggery in Ireland, The General

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ART GALLERIES

Fourth Exhibition of award winning artist JENNY FRANKLIN

CRANE KALMAN GALLERY: 178, Brunton Rd, London SW3

OPERA & BALLET

COLOMBIA 0171 682 6000 (24hr) ENGLISH NATIONAL OPERA

THEATRES

ALDWICH 0171 418 6000 or 0171 571 4000 (4 day helpline) 0171 418 6000/418 6001

ORCHESTRAL

SCHNITTKE Piano music Boris Berman Chandos CHAN 9704 \*\*\* £14.99

HILARY FINCH OPERA VERDI Falstaff

NEW CLASSICAL CDS: Posthumous piano tribute to Schnittke; a bargain Falstaff; and Hummel reappraised

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# BOOKS

## Kneeling before an ever clever guide to culture

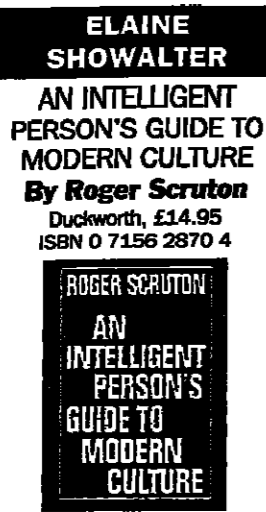
In the preface to this manifesto of high culture, Roger Scruton lays down strict criteria for aspiring readers of the book. "You don't have to be familiar with the entire canon of Western literature" and "the full range of artistic masterpieces", he writes, but you should have at least "some familiarity" with T. S. Eliot, Baudelaire, Mozart, Wagner, Monet, Pousset, Tennyson, Schoenberg, George Herbert, Goethe, Marx, Nietzsche, and Derrida. Please sir, will there be a quiz?

Enticing as his caveat may prove to potential buyers who will regard the display of the *Guide* as a status symbol or babe-magnet, Scruton's thesis is even sterner. "It is my view," he declares, "that the high culture of our civilisation contains knowledge... far more significant than anything... from the channels of popular communication." Culture is profoundly religious; literature has its sacred texts and the function of art is to "enable the human spirit".

Scruton pursues his thesis through chapters on the Enlightenment, Romanticism, fantasy, Modernism, avant-garde and kitsch, youth culture, intellectuals and deconstruction. He concludes with an attack on literary theory and a hope that "the ethical life may still be retrieved".

Along the way he denounces the posturing and sentimentality of Victorian poetry in general and Tennyson in particular. He enthrones the "modernist severity" of T. S. Eliot. And he deplors the "institutionalised flippancy" of Damien Hirst, Oasis, All Saints, Foucault, and all the Post-Modernists and -isms "who thrive in humanities departments". To Scruton, they are all naysayers and nihilists, who deny the transcendence of great art, and specialise in a "theory of repudiation", that is becoming the "official culture of the Post-Modern university".

Scruton is at his philosophical best when he is demonstrating that Derridean deconstruction belongs to the Devil's party. He's taking on a priestly role himself when he argues that art demands and creates



what is best in us, and deserves to be enshrined and studied. Scruton is more acerbic and more accessible in his "Bibliography" where he skewers a variety of books.

Yet I was struck by how closely Scruton's core beliefs resemble those of Camille Paglia, although they reach opposite conclusions. Both argue that religion and religious ritual are at the centre of culture; that art has a mythic and sacred dimension; that Post-Structuralist theory is a deadening and anti-literary philology; that feminism and Post-Modernism lack intellectual rigour. But for Paglia, popular culture has an elemental power that aligns it with the sacred, while Scruton admits that he has "nothing positive to say about popular culture".

Paglia deploys the rhetoric of invective and insult in her tirades against contemporary academic decadence, but Scruton sticks to an immaculate classical prose. What does it mean that two such different writers and thinkers should also share so much common intellectual ground? At the very least, the parallels should make us wary of any didactic guide to modern culture. Such a guide can only have the personal authority and charisma of its author. Roger Scruton's *Guide* is a fascinating millennial document, but if you're going to plan an interesting journey, read more than one.

## Dark side of a life in pictures

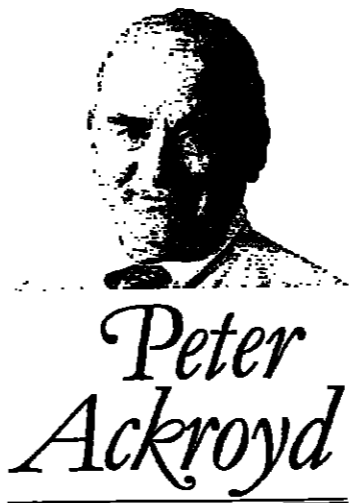
Feared and envied in equal measure, the genius of Caravaggio was threatened by his violent personality, says Peter Ackroyd

Because he had a dark complexion, complete with black deep-set eyes, "this colouring was naturally reflected" in the vivid chiaroscuro of his paintings. So a 17th-century art critic surmised. Because he painted young boys and athletic workmen, he was necessarily homosexual. So Derek Jarman and a host of others have asserted. The analyses are as crude as they are misguided. There is in fact no evidence at all that Caravaggio was homosexual and, as this detailed new biography attests, the plangent darkness of his work has more interesting origins than the colour of his skin.

He was brought up in Milan during the early years of the Catholic Counter-Reformation, a great transforming process of the late 16th century. It was a time when the sacramental system, with its emphasis upon outward tokens of inward grace, was being elaborately reasserted within the rituals of a spectacular faith; those who contemplate the origins of Caravaggio's theatricality may need to look no further than the processions in the streets of

Milan or of Rome. Yet to this visible piety was added tangible horror — the plague visited Milan and within hours took off Caravaggio's father and his grandfather. The artist learnt that light is always accompanied by darkness. For reasons unknown (and there are a great many unknowns even in this capacious biography) he decided that he wanted to become an artist and travelled to Rome in order to begin his apprenticeship. But already his personality threatened to overtake his genius — even before his departure it seems likely that he was involved in street brawls and may have been dispatched to prison in one of the first of his many incarcerations. Yet the times were propitious. On his arrival in 1592, at the age of 21, Rome was on the brink of a reawakening with churches and works of art being created or re-

stored as emblems of spiritual power and religious mystery. Helen Langdon is good at conveying the atmosphere of a city replete with intrigue, scandal and papal gossip even as the new orders of the Jesuits and Capuchins pursued their ministries among the great crowd of paupers and beggars. Out of all these scenes of power and suffering, the vision of Caravaggio was forged. Apparently he moved from lodging to lodging, earning his living by artistic hack-work. He painted heads and still lifes for small sums but these apparently trifling works led ineluctably to his first major commissions, such as *Boy with a Basket of Fruit* and *The Sick Bacchus*, which are imbued with a startling reality. One observer remarked that it was as if he had mixed his paints with silt and flesh as well as oil.



He sought the vivid and the contemporaneous, heightened with a kind of theatrical realism. He painted Bacchus with dirty fingernails, like any street urchin, and used courtesans as his models for saints. The characters of his biblical and classical paintings could have come out of any noisome alley from the backstreets of Rome.



Street fighting man: Michelangelo Caravaggio's self-portrait in his *David with the Head of Goliath*

divine in a pictorial variant of the miracle of transubstantiation. A new spiritual art was being sought — by him and by his imitators — which might, in the words of Helen Langdon, "imitate visible reality, and create figures that seemed real".

Yet his is also a world of graphic passion, darkness and harsh activity within a dramatically heightened space. This biography itself celebrates his achievement while placing it firmly within the culture and society of his time — there are descriptions of other painters, as well as of the patrons and poets of early 17th-century Italy.

It is, in some respects, too rich with detail, perhaps in recompense for the fact that so little is known for certain about Caravaggio's own life, and there are passages when the reader may become dazzled by names and dates. Yet, even in his occasional absence, the violent and inviolable presence of the artist irradiates the narrative.

His fame won him envious detractors as well as enthusiastic proselytisers, and he himself became more belligerent and violent. His sudden prominence led to insecurity as well as pride, and there are several accounts of street fights over courtesans and critics.

Finally he was forced from Rome after murdering a rival in the street and, with sentence of death imposed upon him, he fled in turn to Genoa, Naples, Malta and Sicily. He was "restless, unquiet, ever on the move, feared as a man deranged, described as a madman".

In every place he left tokens of his genius, however, working on the spot to provide images of religious suffering and consolation. In Malta *The Beheading of St John the Baptist* emerged, and in Sicily *The Adoration of the Shepherds* was completed. In the life of no other artist, perhaps, has there been such a litany of sorrowful and glorious mysteries.

He died of a fever on his way back to Rome, having been falsely imprisoned, and this convincing biography closes, appropriately, with a poem which declared him to have been "a victim of misfortune". Caravaggio knew as much himself.

In one of his last paintings, *David with the Head of Goliath*, he painted his own features upon the severed head of the giant.

CARAVAGGIO: A Life By Helen Langdon Chatto & Windus, £25 ISBN 0 701 16063 2

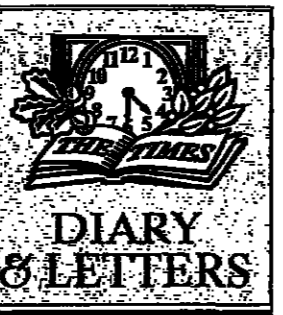
## Words that wear so well

■ **WOULD** you like to sport a *Literati T-shirt*, designed by an Italian publisher and proclaiming slogans such as Jack Kerouac's "Where are we going man?" and Bruce Chatwin's "What am I doing here?" The *staid Booksellers Association* has gone wild and commissioned a series of them from the firm *Parole di Cotone* — or "words of cotton". From today just go into a bookshop and ask for the clothing department.

■ **AT** a Faber launch for Harold Pinter's latest work, *Various Voices: Prose, Poet-*

ry, *Politics*, 1948-1998, his editor, Peggy Butcher, hailed him as "the greatest living playwright". Pinter modestly noted that it was not for him to consider such comparisons — but, of course, he respected her judgment in the matter.

■ **IS** there a cryptographer out there? The historian Andrew Roberts is finishing his biography of the great Prime Minister, Lord Salisbury, but he has a problem. When Kaiser Wilhelm II came to the German throne in 1888, Lord Salisbury made some comments on



him, and his daughter, Lady Gwendolen Cecil, wrote them down. But she wrote them in code. Roberts sent the encrypted passage to GCHQ, but even it could not decipher the diary entry. Can any reader of *The Times* help? Copies of the mysterious entry can be had from Roberts, c/o Weidenfeld and Nicolson, Orion House, 5 Upper St Martin's Lane, London WC2H 9EA. We will report any results.

■ **It is 150 years ago this month that WH Smith opened its first railway bookstall, the famous Easton Road stall. By the beginning of the 1900s its reputation, along with that of other station kiosks, had gone down, with The Times Literary Supplement complaining about the "ha'penny dreadfuls" on sale, and it has been a troubled story since then. For the anniversary this month Smith is overhauling what are now its "Travel Bookshops" and has invited some authors to choose their favourite books to put on sale. Julian Barnes has chosen *Ford Madox Ford's The Good Soldier*, A.S. Byatt has picked *Middelmarch*, and Martin Amis has chosen his hero *Saul Bellow's The Adventures of Augie March* — but with a curious comment: "The book is a catalyst of visionary genius." Aren't catalysts usually removed these days?**

**IN metro ON SATURDAY**

Bollywood to *My Beautiful Laundrette*: Indian actor Saeed Jaffrey talks about his autobiography. Also: Football books — which is top scorer? And *The Ossie Clark Diaries*

## A poet taken out of time

**ILAN STAVANS**  
LORCA  
A Dream of Life  
By Leslie Stainton  
Bloomington, £20  
ISBN 0 7475 4128 0



Federico Garcia Lorca with a friend in New York

Time has turned Federico Garcia Lorca into a symbol. This year marks the centennial of his birth. It coincides with the anniversary of the Spanish-American War of 1898, in which Spain finally lost its imperial place around the globe. That the two events are happening simultaneously is no accident, for Lorca has come to be seen as the liberating voice of a nation whose transition to modernity has been not only slow but unconvincing. Also his death in 1936, under the bayonets of the Nationalist partisans of General Franco, is generally understood as the detonator of the horrors of the Spanish Civil War, so his end, as his beginning, is emblematic of an era of profound change.

Leslie Stainton has spent 14 years researching Lorca's legacy. She has interviewed every surviving member of his family and had access to previously undisclosed manuscripts, photographs and archives. Her biography is designed as an exalted eulogy, a homage to a seminal poet and playwright whose oeuvre has brought Spain to the world. Therein, I'm afraid, is its most serious shortcoming. It is apt and informative, filled with minutiae about Lorca's struggles. Stainton's Lorca is a modern Christian hero and scapegoat caught in an awkward, Pre-

Modern society incapable of fully appreciating his talents. His courage to unsettle, to speak out, to personify his own dreams, is rightly applauded. There is something in her portrait that makes him look like a Spanish imitation of Oscar Wilde, even though Lorca dreamt of surpassing Wilde, of making him look insignificant, like "some sort of obese, pusillanimous queen".

What is missing is the perceptive eye that can insert a biographee in history. Not all has been applause for Lorca. Borges, for one, described him once as a show-off, "a professional Andalusian" and "a minor poet". But Stainton makes

no room to analyse his limitations. She submits a biography traditional in style and unreflective in spirit that adds little to our understanding of Lorca's complexities.

The Spanish-American War is predicated in an early chapter as the parameter against which he must be understood, but Stainton devotes to it only a handful of repetitive paragraphs. And the Civil War is also left unexplored under any refreshing light. These limitations have a serious impact on the overall portrait of Lorca. Why has he eclipsed, beyond Spain's borders, poets of the highest calibre, such as Alberti and Gilman, Machado and Sali-

nas? Among the multiple studies that preceded Stainton are, most notably, those of Ian Gibson, whose research of Lorca's death confronted the Spanish Government. To a large extent, his work explained Lorca for a post-Franco Spain, a country infatuated with its newly found freedom. But Stainton's should have been a biography for our *fin de siècle*, for it comes after Stonewall and the consolidation of the Gay Movement. It is published at a time when Spain has retreated into a more reactionary political climate and *la movida*, the explosive artistic movement in Spain, is rapidly turned into history.

And perhaps most significant, it comes just as the nation as a whole is allowing its various autonomous regions to indulge in a dream: the dream of secession. Why is Lorca so significant today? What does he tell us about Hispanic sexuality? In what way is he the symbol of a Spain no longer alive?

About Lorca's sexuality, for instance, Stainton doesn't seem to be capable of offering the right clues. What type of relationship did Lorca have with Salvador Dalí, a close friend in his formative years? What about his rigid upbringing and his explorations of Havana and Buenos Aires? And about his encounter with the Whitmanesque New York and his escapades in Vermont? Similarly, his success in making poetry out of folklore — the "Spanish popular soul" — and vice versa is seen by Stainton as a sign of genius without ever attempting to elucidate what is truly "Spanish" in him and if such an adjective is still applicable as we move into the next millennium.

A century after the loss of Puerto Rico, Cuba and the Philippines, Spain is yet again submerged in a heated debate about its collective identity. That a new major biography of its national poet arrives daunted is, clearly, another symptom of what the country has been so incapable of confronting: its present.

## Evoking souls of the departed

**GERALD JACOBS**  
THE RIVER MIDNIGHT  
By Lilian Nattel  
Review, £12.99  
ISBN 0 7472 2215 0

**PEARS ON A WILLOW TREE**  
By Leslie Pietrzyk  
Granta, £9.99  
ISBN 1 86207 220 5

MOST Jews nowadays view Poland as a graveyard: the site of the most clinical of this century's various experiments in extinction. For the Polish Catholic diaspora, the link is probably more positive. For both sets of émigrés, such events as the installation of a Polish Pope and the cracking of the Communist carapace will have quickened the pulse.

Although individual Jewish lives continued in Europe after the war, Jewish life was eradi-

cated. And it is this, in its most lively incarnation — the 19th-century, Yiddish-speaking, Polish *shtetl*, or village — that Lilian Nattel evokes in her first novel.

The meticulously assembled social detail in *The River Midnight*, far from trumpeting its historical authenticity, adds a vital dimension to an engaging tale about the inhabitants of the fictional *shtetl* of Blaszkia.

The superstitious urgency of

*shtetl* life is highlighted by the technique of presenting a handful of key events — an arrest, secret sexual liaisons, a scandalous pregnancy — from the contrasting perspectives of different characters. Less suc-

cessful are the random touches of magic, the intrusion of occasional clairvoyant commentary, and the brief excursions beyond Blaszkia to New York and Warsaw.

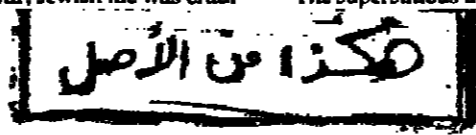
If one is constantly aware of the division between sentimentality and schmaltz, for the most part Nattel exercises enough control to keep on the right side, conveying a real sense of the spiritual warmth of a community and of its erosion.

Much of this emerges from mother-and-daughter relationships, the central preoccupation of Leslie Pietrzyk's equally remarkable first novel. To such a degree that Poland — the homeland to which her four generations of women

can trace their lineage — is itself a kind of mother.

The novel is set in the United States, mainly in Detroit, the focus of Polish Catholic immigration, but also in Arizona, where the rebellious Ginger attempts to escape the hold of the past. She succeeds only in embracing a destructive alcoholism, leaving her fully Americanised daughter Amy to pick up the pieces.

Pietrzyk's portrayal of the bonds between mothers and daughters is both powerful and subtle. "The old ways" are gradually squeezed out through the generations like toothpaste from a tube but, unless their importance is acknowledged, they cannot be relinquished without pain.









Bargains of the week: Mystic theatricals in Wiltshire; two-for-one Canaries offer; say Hi to Bali at a discount



A selection of last-minute holiday and travel opportunities at home, on the Continent and farther afield, many at bargain prices

BRITAIN

A HOUSE PARTY venue in deepest Herefordshire is available from Crystal Premier Britain. The converted terrace sleeps 15, has an indoor pool and outdoor tennis court and costs £650 to rent for two nights and £1,180 for a week. Details: 0181-390 8513.

PERCHED on the edge of a council estate, the bizarre-looking Tillington Hall in Stafford might not be everyone's idea of a dream hotel, but it has an indoor pool and gym, offers good food, is handy for Alton Towers and available at a discount from Superbreak. Half-board costs £40 a night until Monday, with further savings next month. Details: 01904 679999.

JERSEYS pre-Christmas celebrations, Fête de Noël, can be enjoyed on a three-night break from December 11 with Modern Hotels. The £85 package includes return catamaran crossings from Poole and half-board. Details: 01534 59529.

DISCOVER the myths and legends of the "Land of the Moonrakers" on weekend breaks in Wiltshire. Dawn over Stonehenge, guided tours of Avebury and Salisbury and a visit to the theatre are all included for £149, together with half-board in small hotels or guesthouses. The next break runs from December 11 to 13. Details: 01722 500956.

EDINBURGH remains a winter favourite for shopping and culture and Goldenrail is offering savings at the Parliament House Hotel, with B&B reduced to £33.60 and special deals on Sundays. Details: 01904 638973.

GUESTS can eat (a total of nine meals), drink and be merry, with carol-singing and hill-walking, on a three-night Christmas break at a Victorian country house hotel in Mid Wales, available from Sunvil UK. The holiday starts on Christmas Eve and costs £366. Details: 0181-232 9788.

EUROPE

CHRISTMAS markets in Alsace, in spectacularly decorated cities such as Strasbourg or villages such as La Petite Pierre, are featured in Crosta's special programme from November 27. Prices start at £117 for three nights' B&B with return Eurotunnel or ferry crossings. Details: 0161-926 9999.

SWEDEN is trying to steal some of the Santa Claus market from its Finnish neighbours with short breaks to Stockholm that include day trips to Santaworld at Gesunda Mountain. The breaks are available every Friday from November 27 with Scantours and Travelscene. Prices starting at £510 for two nights' B&B and return flights; children go half-price. Details: Scantours, 0171-829 2927; Travelscene, 0181-427 4445.

CYPRUS for a fortnight's self-catering for £169, a saving of more than £100, seems an unbeatable offer from Sunset Holidays. Fly from Gatwick on November 25 and stay at apartments in Limassol. Details: 01204 434441.

FLORENCE, Venice and Rome are available for three

nights for £199 and four for £219 from Impulse Holidays next month. Return flights from Gatwick and B&B in central hotels are included. Details: 0181-741 9007.

FLY to the Canaries at no charge is the eye-catching offer from Club Travel 2000. But you must first persuade a friend to pay a modest £119 for a return ticket from Manchester to Tenerife. The two-for-one offer applies to flights departing on December 4 and returning a fortnight later. Details: 0161-968 2000.

SKIING is about to start again in Europe, and some of the best offers feature Austria. Crystal Ski is offering a week in a chalet in Söll from December 12 for £269. The price includes return flights and half-board with free local wine. Details: 0181-399 5144.

A WEEKEND of skiing on Austrian slopes—to see whether you like it or to put in some practice before the season really starts—is on offer from Thomas Cook Holidays. Fly from Gatwick on December 11 in time for an afternoon on skis, enjoy two nights' half-board, visit the Christmas market in Salzburg and pay from £249. Details: 01733 335513.



One of the great temples at Luxor: Nile cruises for £299

LONG HAUL

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Purpose of Money misa

Law Report Trade union natu



Law Report November 19 1998 Court of Appeal

Purpose of custody time limits must be given due weight

Regina v Manchester Crown Court, Ex parte McDonald, Regina v Leeds Crown Court, Ex parte Hunt, Regina v Winchester Crown Court, Ex parte Forbes, Ex parte Wilson and Mason

Before Lord Bingham of Cornhill, Lord Chief Justice and Mr Justice Collins (Judgment November 9)

On an application for extension of custody time limits, the court had to be careful to give full weight to the overriding purposes of section 22(3) of the Prosecution of Offences Act 1985 and regulation 5(3) of the Prosecution of Offences (Custody Time Limits) Regulations (SI 1987 No 299) which were:

(i) to ensure that the periods for which unconvicted defendants were held in custody awaiting trial were as short as reasonably and practically possible;

(ii) to ensure that the periods for which unconvicted defendants were held in custody awaiting trial were as short as reasonably and practically possible;

(iii) to ensure that the periods for which unconvicted defendants were held in custody awaiting trial were as short as reasonably and practically possible;

(iv) to ensure that the periods for which unconvicted defendants were held in custody awaiting trial were as short as reasonably and practically possible;

(v) to ensure that the periods for which unconvicted defendants were held in custody awaiting trial were as short as reasonably and practically possible;

(vi) to ensure that the periods for which unconvicted defendants were held in custody awaiting trial were as short as reasonably and practically possible;

Money misapplied by recipient

Regina v Klineberg, Regina v Marsden

Before Lord Justice Rose, Mr Justice Scott Baker and Mr Justice Maurice Kay (Judgment November 6)

Where money was received for the purpose of transmission to a stakeholder but was then misapplied by the recipient for his own purposes, section 5(3) of the Theft Act 1968 applied so that the money belonged to the person who paid it, provided that it could be proved that the recipient was under a legal obligation to retain and deal with it or its proceeds in a particular way and that what occurred was a breach of that obligation.

Such a case was distinguishable from R v Preddy (1996) AC 815, a case of mortgage fraud where the funds obtained were used for the intended purposes, namely the purchase of the property.

The Court of Appeal, Criminal Division, so stated in a reserved judgment allowing appeals of Jonathan Simon Klineberg and David Marsden and quashing four convictions.

On May 16, 1997 at Leeds Crown Court (Judge Cockcroft and a jury) they were each convicted on 10 counts of theft and Klineberg was convicted on additionally on four counts of forgery.

The trial judge certified under section 1(2) of the Criminal Appeal Act 1968 that the case was fit for appeal against conviction in relation to the decision in Preddy. On July 2, 1998 it was ordered that the Preddy point and an unrelated point be heard together, and that if the appellants failed on those grounds there should be a further hearing of the residual grounds.

Section 5 of the Theft Act 1968 provides: "(3) Where a person receives property from or on account of another, and is under an obligation to the other to retain and deal with that property or its proceeds in a particular way, the property or proceeds shall be regarded (as against him) as belonging to the other."

Mr Simon Bourne-Anton, QC and Mr Jeremy Barnett, assigned by the Registrar of Criminal Appeals, for Klineberg; Mr Guy Keurl, assigned by the Registrar of Criminal Appeals, for Marsden. Mr Christopher Storey, QC and Mr Kaiser Nazir for the Crown.

MR JUSTICE MAURICE KAY, giving the judgment of the court, said that the prosecution case was that the appellants were involved in a timeshare fraud whereby in-

stead of purchasing timeshares in a development in Lanzarote for his own purposes, the recipient did not acquire any timeshares. Apartments were built in Lanzarote in a country club complex, Marsden acquired an off-the-shelf company, Powerhouse Canaries Ltd, and became a director of it.

He was later joined by a solicitor called Salim who became a director and provided financial backing. Powerhouse entered into an agreement to buy the country club from the original developers and to market the timeshares.

The purchase price of timeshares was to be paid to a trust company, Timeshare Trustees International, which would act as stakeholder to protect the purchasers.

Between October 1990 and November 1991, 237 people paid over £500,000 to Powerhouse in connection with intended purchases of timeshares but only £23 had its way to TTI.

The prosecution case was that Marsden was the prime mover in a timeshare fraud and that Klineberg played a significant, albeit junior, part. He was effectively in charge of Powerhouse's office in England and stood to gain in the profits. The case against him on the forgery counts was that he had signed bogus membership certificates to lobb off rate purchasers.

The 10 counts of theft in the indictment, which were put forward as sample counts, charged the appellants with the theft of purchasers' money "or the proceeds thereof".

In the present appeal it was submitted on behalf of the appellants that this was a Preddy case and that once the timeshare purchasers paid monies to Powerhouse, by whatever means, which were then paid into Powerhouse's bank account, such monies ceased to be property belonging to the purchasers and were replaced by a chose in action in the form of a credit balance belonging to Powerhouse.

Agent entitled to his commission

Nahum v Royal Holloway and Bedford New College

Before Lord Justice Nourse, Lord Justice Waller and Sir Iain Gidwell (Judgment November 12)

To be entitled to commission for introducing a buyer to a seller, an agent was required to show that it was his actions that brought about the relationship of buyer and seller. Neither delay nor the actions of others that prevented the agent from himself effecting the sale transaction deprived him of his entitlement to be remunerated by the seller.

The Court of Appeal so held in a reserved judgment dismissing an appeal by the defendants, Royal Holloway and Bedford New College, from the decision of Judge Prosser, QC, who, sitting as a judge of the High Court in July 1997, held that the plaintiff, Mr Peter Nahum, was entitled to be paid commission in respect of the sale by the defendants of a painting by Constable, "View on the Stour near Dedham".

Mr Anthony Temple, QC and Mr Adrian Hughes for the defendants; Mr Joe South for the plaintiff.

Where, as in the present case, people were induced to contract or did contract, by virtue of implied terms or otherwise, on the basis that their money would be safeguarded by trusteeship, there was clearly a legal obligation within the meaning of section 5(3).

The next and final question in relation to section 5(3) was whether the plaintiff was to be regarded in each case the person who could prove a breach of the obligation.

The counts fell into two categories: those where it was alleged that the stakeholder was TTI; and those where the intending purchasers had been induced to purchase their firm.

There was a formal admission at the trial that the total sum paid by Powerhouse to the solicitor and his firm was £29,000. That caused counsel for the appellants to submit that the defendant could not prove that, in relation to any one of the counts in the second category, counts 3, 4, 5 and 8, the £29,000 did not include the money or its proceeds which were alleged to have been stolen.

After considerable hesitation, their Lordships had come to the conclusion that, unattractive though the submission was in its merits, it was correct.

Although the counts in question were properly described as sample counts, they could not be described as general deficiency counts in the technical sense of that term.

The prosecution was not relieved of its burden of proving that, in relation to each of those counts, the relevant sum did not go to the solicitor or his firm in accordance with section 5(3). It could not be charged that burden and accordingly the convictions in respect of counts 3, 4, 5 and 8 must be quashed.

Their Lordships had dealt with the question of obligation and breach of obligation in relation to section 5(3) on the basis of the evidence and admissions adduced at trial. To the extent that the appellants remained convicted they might wish to pursue the balance of their grounds of appeal.

A separate ground of appeal based on the public interest was dismissed. That left the balance of the grounds of appeal in relation to the surviving convictions which fell to be considered at a subsequent hearing, along with the appeals against sentence.

Solicitors: Crown Prosecution Service, serious fraud branch, Yorkshire.

European Law Report

Trade union nature of organisation

Institute of the Motor Industry v Customs and Excise Commissioners Case C-149/97

Before P. J. G. Kapteyn, President of Chamber and Judges G. F. Mancini, J. L. Murray, H. Ragnemalm and K. M. Ioannou Advocate General C. Cosmas (Opinion May 14) (Judgment November 12)

An organisation was entitled to exemption from value-added tax, as an organisation with aims of a trade union nature, if it defended the interests of its members, whether workers, employers, independent professionals or traders, and represented them vis-à-vis third parties.

The Sixth Chamber of the Court of Justice of the European Communities so held when giving a preliminary ruling, on a reference under article 177 of the EC Treaty by the VAT and Duties Tribunal, London, on a question of Sixth Council Directive 77/388/EEC of May 17, 1977 on the harmonisation of the laws of the member states relating to turnover taxes: common system of value added tax: uniform basis of assessment (OJ 1977 L145 p1).

The Institute of the Motor Industry was a voluntary association of persons working in the retail sector of the motor industry.

The Customs and Excise Commissioners ruled that it did not satisfy the conditions for exemption from VAT under Group 9 of Schedule 9 to the Value Added Tax Act 1994, so that its supplies of services to its members in return for their annual subscriptions constituted

taxable supplies for VAT purposes. The institute appealed to the VAT tribunal.

In the order for reference the tribunal indicated that in its view the institute did not fall within Schedule 9 because, inter alia, it was not "a trade union or other organisation of persons having as its main object the negotiation on behalf of its members of the terms and conditions of their employment" within paragraph 1(a) of Group 9.

The tribunal referred the question whether, regard being had to the differences in the various language versions of article 13(A)(1)(b) of the Sixth Directive, the services supplied by an association such as the institute were exempt from VAT as falling within the scope of that provision.

Luxembourg

at all levels, by validating courses, run by other institutions. The taught theoretical skills, making awards on the completion of those courses and grading its members, disseminating information designed to keep its members up to date with developments in the industry and in their skills, and keeping a job placement register.

The expressions used in some language versions of article 13(A)(1)(b), including the English, referred essentially to the aims of workers' trade unions, whereas those used in other versions, including the French, *objectifs de nature syndicale*, referred also to the aims of professional associations which did not constitute such unions.

In the event of divergence between the language versions, the provision in question had to be interpreted by reference to the purpose and general scheme of the rules of which it formed a part.

The terms used to specify the exemptions envisaged by article 13 were to be interpreted strictly, as they constituted exceptions to the general principle that turnover tax was levied on all services supplied for consideration by a taxable person.

Further, the aim of article 13(A) was to exempt from VAT certain activities which were in the public interest and which did not provide an exception for every such activity, but only those listed and described in great detail.

In the light of those considerations, a non-profit-making organisation which aimed to promote the interests of its members could not, where that object was not put into practice by defending and representing the collective interests of its

members vis-à-vis the relevant decision-makers, be regarded as having as its main object the defence of the interests of its members, whether they were workers, employers, independent professionals or traders carrying on a particular economic activity, and to represent them vis-à-vis the appropriate third parties, including the public authorities.

Thus, a non-profit-making organisation whose main object was to defend and represent the collective interests of its members satisfied the criterion of exercising an activity in the public interest which was the basis of the exemptions set out in article 13(A)(1)(b), in so far as it provided its members with a representative voice and strength in negotiations with third parties.

It was for the national tribunal to assess, in the light of those considerations, whether an association such as the institute was an organisation with aims of a trade union nature within article 13(A)(1)(b). The Court therefore ruled:

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INDOOR ROWING

Redgrave sets sights on beating his record

By Mike Rosewell

MORE than 1,000 competitors aged from ten to 81 will take part in the British indoor rowing championships at the Rivermead Leisure Centre at Reading on Sunday.

Seventy-five rowing ergometers will be in operation all day on the race floor and a further 40 will be used for warming-up. Entrants include canoeists, explorers, footballers, marathon runners, swimmers, triathletes and wrestlers, but the winners of most of the 40 categories are likely to come from dedicated rowers.

Steve Redgrave, now 36 and four times an Olympic gold medal-winner, is competing in the 30-39 category and will be trying to beat his British 2,000 metres record of 5min 48sec, although his coach is predicting a time of 5min 52sec. His main opposition is likely to come from Colin Greenaway, 31, a member of the British double scull this year and an indoor winner in 1997.

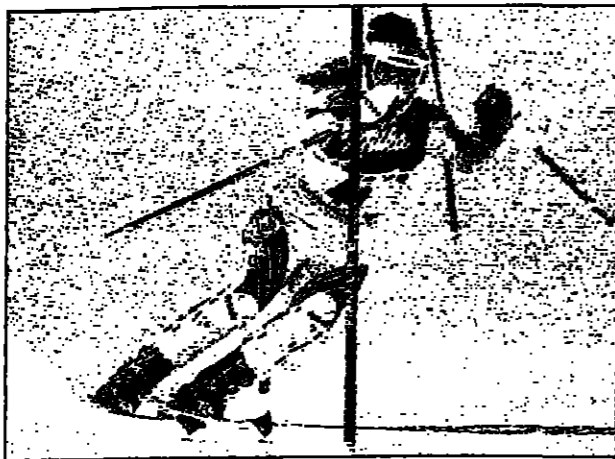
The open men's category reads like a "who's who" of British rowing, although Greg Searle, the former Olympic gold medal-winner and indoor world record-holder, and James Cracknell, Redgrave's coxless four crew-mate and twice a world champion, should be the men to watch. The predicted times for Searle and Cracknell are 5min 50sec and 5min 52sec. Cracknell will also be watching Redgrave's time, since he is on record as saying: "I don't just want to beat all the other fours in the world, I want to beat everyone in my four as well."

Cath Bishop, a world coxless pairs silver medal-winner this summer, looks likely to retain her women's indoor title with a predicted time of 6min 45sec.



Redgrave favourite

Briton returns with a mission



Carrick-Anderson on her way to eleventh place at Sestriere

After a period of disillusionment, skier Emma Carrick-Anderson is back on slopes

SARAH POTTER



Today marks a new beginning for Emma Carrick-Anderson, as well as a new season. The icy slopes of Park City, in the United States, will test the skill of skiing's elite as five months of World Cup slalom competition begins. Rumours of disillusioned retirement, rife only a year ago, have now been silenced and the 23-year-old Scot, the most talented of British skiers, is ready to face the future.

"This is a new me," she said. "I feel very different, very motivated. In the past, when I was working with a coach on a one-to-one basis, it was difficult because I was training and living in isolation. Thomas Schadle and Nils Coberger were both brilliant coaches and if I had five other girls there with me, it would have been excellent."

Carrick-Anderson is vibrant and spirited. Sitting in foreign hotels with no one to talk to is not her idea of fun. Now, though, she is back in a team environment and feels that her best is yet to come. "I didn't want to jank it in because skiing is the only thing I've ever really wanted to do," she said. "So I had a chat with the coaches of the Finnish Alpine team, to see if I could train with them, and they struck up an agreement with our federation."

The British Ski and Snowboard Federation is already reaping the rewards. At the end of October, in Sölden, Austria, Carrick-Anderson completed her first World Cup giant slalom, finishing in 37th place. "I was really pleased, because I had such a terrible

year last season," she said. "My ranking had slipped from No 49 into the eighties, proving that if you're not happy and you don't want it enough, it doesn't happen."

Her goal for this season, in which the Alpine thrills will be on show in ten countries, is to climb towards the definitive elite: the top 30. "That's when you've made it in skiing," she said, "but it's difficult to sustain and amazing how people yo-yo. A couple of years ago, two Swedish girls were in the top five; now, they're not even in the top 70. It will be hard, but I know I can do it."

Isolated results show that she can. Her 1992 debut in the Albertville Olympic Games in France saw the freckly 16-year-old clinch a startling eighth place. Better though, she claims, was her eleventh position in the 1997 world championships in Sestriere, Italy. "It was more satisfying," she said. "When I was 16, there wasn't as much pressure and in Italy the conditions were very icy and difficult. It was an amazing feeling, the highlight of my career, and I want to experience it again."

This vigorous sense of future is all the more touching, heroic even, since it comes on



Smiling again: Carrick-Anderson has survived the bad times and looks for a rosy future

the back of a numbing, tragic past. Carrick-Anderson was brought up in Dunblane and her mother, Fiona, runs a kindergarten next to the school that can never be forgotten. "Mum had a lot of the kids before they went to the primary," she said. "What happened was sick and unbelievable and people are still trying to recover from the hurt."

The death of her father, Chris, two months ago, is achingly painful to accept. "Mum and Dad were very keen skiers, which is why I started aged 2," she said. "With Cairngorm not being very far away,

we'd go there at weekends and then we started to go abroad at Christmas and Easter. My family don't travel with me, but they come to visit sometimes and I hope my Mum will still do that. "I think with the things that have happened, I now realise that it's not the end of the world when I have a bad day. Those things have really changed my attitude and, while I'm glad I've got skiing to focus on, I also want to go out there and enjoy it. Being with the Finnish girls has brought that home, because if they have a bad time it's like: 'Tomorrow is another day. That's a really healthy attitude.'"

SWIMMING  
Rolph hunts the scalp of her European rival

By Craig Lord

SUSAN ROLPH, the double Commonwealth champion, heads a 48-strong Great Britain team that will battle for supremacy with Germany at the European short-course championships in Sheffield from December 11 to 13.

Rolph's personal challenge is daunting, even at the end of the best year of her swimming career, one in which she triumphed twice in Kuala Lumpur while still high on the crest of a wave that she caught after twice beating Jenny Thompson, the Olympic champion from the United States, at international events in the spring.

First, there are the two medley titles to retain and a European short-course record over 200 metres on which to improve; then, there is Sandra Völker, who beat Rolph in both the 50 and 100 metres freestyle at the inaugural championships in Rostock two years ago.

It is Völker's scalp that Rolph wants. In 1996, the year in which the sprinter from Hamburg was runner-up over 100 metres and the bronze medal-winner over 50 metres at the Olympic Games, she paid homage to Rolph by successfully arguing with officialdom — to her own detriment — that the Briton should be made woman of the championships. Rolph had equalled the medley record but was denied the £2,000 prize because officials argued that a record must be "broken" to merit the money, the first to be offered at a significant international swimming championship.

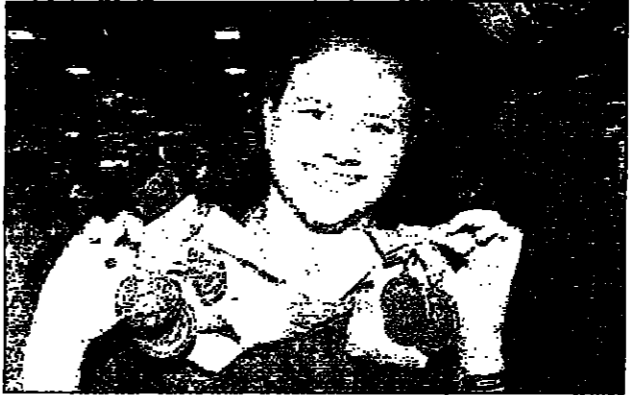
Völker is likely to be less accommodating this time, conscious, no doubt, of the rise and rise of Rolph throughout this year. Her German teammates will also have an eye on

the British squad in general. In 1996, Germany won 13 of the 38 titles.

The only other British winner was Mark Foster, who will defend his 50 metres butterfly and 50 metres freestyle titles. Foster is one of ten to be selected from the University of Bath, a fifth of the team and evidence that much good work is being done at the first centre of excellence for swimming in Britain.

Sheffield offers the large British team the chance to showcase the gains that they have made in the short time since lottery funding has changed their lives and the organisation of swimming in this country. The man who is likely to make that most obvious is James Hickman, who is a serious prospect for several titles, including man of the championships. The pot of prize-money has been extended to more than £500,000, although some goes only if records fall.

GREAT BRITAIN SQUAD: Men: G Bratton (University of Bath); S Britton (University of Bath); A Clayton (University of Bath); M Foster (University of Bath); S Handley (University of Bath); J Harris (Greenwich Borough Mariners); M Harris (Tower Hamlets); J Hickman (City of Leeds); G Hudson (Portsmouth Northsea); M Jones (Borough of Easing); M Kidd (Leeds); R Madden (University of Bath); G Meadows (City of Leeds); D Mew (University of Bath); S Parry (City of Liverpool); N Poole (Portsmouth Northsea); M Reacher (City of Leeds); A Ruckwood (City of Birmingham); S Seddon (Durham); S Smith (Stockport Metro); A Whitehead (City of Coventry); D Wigg (City of Newcastle); N Willey (University of Bath); J Wilson (City of Leeds); Women: R Brett (Leeds); R Coates (Reading); S Collins (University of Bath); R Coomer (Wigan Wasps); M Don-Duncan (Aston Central); H Eary (Newcastle Stationers); K Evans (Roca Contractors); D Ford (York City Baths); S Hopkins (City of Chester); V Horner (Stockport Metro); C Huddart (City of Leeds); K Higgins (Newcastle); J King (University of Bath); G Lee (Campall Edwards); K Legg (Flemington Ours); M Marshall (South Lincolnshire); J Mullins (Oprington Jays); S Nesbitt (Portsmouth Northsea); M Pedder (Portsmouth Northsea); K Pickering (Tropics); S Rolph (City of Newcastle); K Sinden (Portsmouth Northsea); A Sheppard (Uxbridge & Beaconsfield); H Watts (City of Bath)



Rolph faces a daunting challenge in her best season

Advertisement for Habitat Christmas sale. Features a large image of a dining table with a white tablecloth and chairs. Text includes: 'SAVE 20% AT HABITAT THIS CHRISTMAS', 'Cut the cost of Christmas with your Times shopping card, inserted in Monday's newspaper', and 'Simply attach six differently numbered tokens from The Times and two tokens from The Sunday Times to your shopping card. Twelve tokens will be published in The Times until November 28 and a total of three tokens will be printed in The Sunday Times until November 29. Your completed shopping card entitles you to buy as many items as you wish on a single shopping trip and to receive a 20% discount\* off your total bill.'

Advertisement for SHEEHAN on BRIDGE. Text: 'By ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT. This is a hand from the 1998 Gold Cup quarter-finals. See if you can see how East-West could have defended better.'

Bridge hand diagram showing Dealer West, E-W game, and IMPs. Includes a contract table and a list of cards for each player.

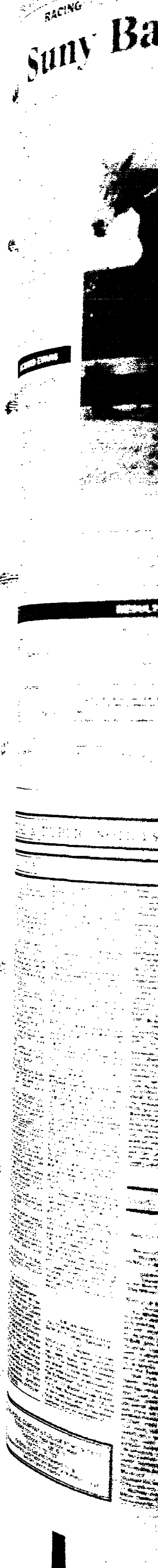
South opened Two No-Trumps after three passes, and thereafter South showed five hearts and North four spades. West rightly hit upon the lead of the seven of spades, declarer put in the eight from dummy, and East played the nine. Sometimes it is correct for declarer to take the ace in this position, in case East has K9, Q9, or J9 doubleton. But here that was inconsistent with the lead of the seven — it could not be fourth best from a five-card suit headed by two spade honours. So declarer ducked the nine of spades and won the spade continuation. After cashing the ace and king of clubs, he entered dummy with the jack of diamonds, and led the jack of clubs. When West won and had no more spades, declarer was home with an overtrick.

WORD-WATCHING section by Philip Howard. Includes words like OPOSSUMING, RETICELLA, and PHLIZZ with definitions.

Advertisement for KEENE on CHESS. Text: 'By RAYMOND KEENE, CHESS CORRESPONDENT. Timman wins. Today I conclude my coverage of the VAM tournament in Holland with two wins by the Dutch grandmaster Jan Timman. In both games Timman outplays the former world junior champion, Tal Shaked, from the US.'

Chess game analysis for White: Tal Shaked vs Black: Jan Timman. Includes a list of moves and a Sicilian Defence variation.

WINNING MOVE section by Raymond Keene. Includes a chessboard diagram and text: 'Black to play. This position is from the game Hassan - Joy, Elista Olympiad, 1998. Black has achieved a powerful concentration of force along the h- and g-files, while White is wriggling desperately on the back two rows. How did Black now finish off? Solution on page 54.'



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RACING: REPEAT HAYDOCK VICTORY INSPIRES MEMORIES OF DESERT ORCHID

Suny Bay turns back clock

By Chris McGrath

THE unquenchable gallop and rhythmic jumping that enabled Suny Bay to repeat last year's success were not the only contributions to an acute sense of déjà vu after the Edward Harmer Chase at Haydock yesterday. Nor was it the way See More Business again jumped so rustily on his way to fourth place. What jugged the memory was the happy face of Simon Sherwood, even though it was the one new element this time round.



Suny Bay, right, takes the last on his way to winning the Edward Harmer Chase at Haydock

Richard Evans

Cheltenham Gold Cups. It is a measure of Suny Bay's outstanding comeback yesterday that Sherwood agrees the resemblance to be more than a simple matter of coat colour. "Very honest horses, both of them," he said. "Dessie was a bit faster, but there's no doubt this fellow is a bit special too."

Suny Bay, running off a 12lb higher mark than last year, had to overcome not just five of the best staying chasers in the business, but also a shattering experience on his last visit to a racecourse. His great heart pounding against the

mutual pressure of 12 stone on his back and deep mud underfoot, he had inspired memories of Crisp when second in the Grand National in April. Yet he was clearly thought ready to sustain his fine record fresh, backed from 4-1 in the morning to 2-1. As a cold rain

began to seep from the pale sky, Suny Bay strolled sleepily around the paddock, and there was a touch of laziness to his racing too. But he retains the metronomic gallop that is his hallmark, springing relentlessly from fence to fence. In turn he exhausted Mahler, foolhardy enough to hustle him in front; The Grey Monk, whose need of the run was reflected in some sloppy jumping; and Strath Royal, who rallied for third. Escarfeigne improved on his Wetherby return by taking second, beaten five lengths, but it had been

See More Business who looked the graver threat turning for home. Ridden for the first time by Joeizzard, he was upstaged at the second last. Yet while Bradley was able to gain momentum at the final two fences, See More Business confirmed that jumping remains his Achilles heel by adding to the mistakes that had already blighted his performance. Paul Nicholls, his trainer, was by no means downhearted. "Joe said they wouldn't beat us again," he said. "I never thought he'd win today. He would have to be at his very best and there'd be no point having him at his peak now. You'll see the improvement in the Rehearsal Chase at Chesham, which will put him right for Christmas."

David Nicholls was equally upbeat about Escarfeigne, who will also take in the King George. The winner, meanwhile, is unlikely to defend the Hennessy Gold Cup at Newbury on Saturday week. "I don't like the idea of a penalty taking his weight to 12st 4lb," Sherwood said. "He might come back here for the Tommy Whittle Chase next month."

Suny Bay is 12-1 from 20-1 with Coral and William Hill for the Tote Cheltenham Gold Cup, though the sponsor offers 14-1 and 16-1 against his improving and consistent National Hunt debut. Today's race was a 10lb better than last year's. Bradley said, "He jumped fabulous and kept pulling out more. I don't think it was the 12 stone that beat him at Aintree, it was the 10st 4lb Earth Summit card, and he won't get that next time. But if conditions came right, I've always said he could equalify with a Gold Cup."

RESULTS FROM YESTERDAY'S THREE MEETINGS

Haydock
Going: good to soft
1.20 (2m 4f) 1. Storm of Gold (M. J. Moore, 7-1), 2. Gentle Ravage (S. J. Pegg, 11-1), 3. Agony Leader (S. J. Pegg, 11-1), 4. Sir John (S. J. Pegg, 11-1), 5. Sir John (S. J. Pegg, 11-1), 6. Sir John (S. J. Pegg, 11-1), 7. Sir John (S. J. Pegg, 11-1), 8. Sir John (S. J. Pegg, 11-1), 9. Sir John (S. J. Pegg, 11-1), 10. Sir John (S. J. Pegg, 11-1), 11. Sir John (S. J. Pegg, 11-1), 12. Sir John (S. J. Pegg, 11-1), 13. Sir John (S. J. Pegg, 11-1), 14. Sir John (S. J. Pegg, 11-1), 15. Sir John (S. J. Pegg, 11-1), 16. Sir John (S. J. Pegg, 11-1), 17. Sir John (S. J. Pegg, 11-1), 18. Sir John (S. J. Pegg, 11-1), 19. Sir John (S. J. Pegg, 11-1), 20. Sir John (S. J. Pegg, 11-1), 21. Sir John (S. J. Pegg, 11-1), 22. Sir John (S. J. Pegg, 11-1), 23. Sir John (S. J. Pegg, 11-1), 24. Sir John (S. J. Pegg, 11-1), 25. Sir John (S. J. Pegg, 11-1), 26. Sir John (S. J. Pegg, 11-1), 27. Sir John (S. J. Pegg, 11-1), 28. Sir John (S. J. Pegg, 11-1), 29. Sir John (S. J. Pegg, 11-1), 30. Sir John (S. J. 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GOLF

# Pressure tells as O'Grady loses temper

FROM JOHN HOPKINS, GOLF CORRESPONDENT, IN SAN ROQUE

THERE is little in sports so brutally competitive as the six-round qualifying school that is under way in Spain and, after the first day on the Costa del Sol, there were professional golfers whose sunburnt faces concealed hearts in which hopes, fears and anger were juxtaposed.

The anger was experienced by Terry Hanson — and he was not even playing. Hanson, the professional at Cardiff Golf Club, was caddy for Stephen Dodd, a past Amateur champion. Dodd's three-ball included Nico van Rensburg and Mac O'Grady, of the United States, whose background is exotic and whose conversation is sometimes hard to follow. "I want to climb into the volcano and be at one with the lava," O'Grady said once. Yesterday, by way of explaining his presence on this side of the Atlantic, he said: "Coming back to Europe makes me feel like a little turtle making its way back to Galapagos."

The start and on the 11th he and Van Rensburg had an altercation when O'Grady complained that Van Rensburg's caddy was moving in his line of sight. The American said later that Van Rensburg and Dodd had talked among themselves, ignored him and often moved in his line during the round. He walked off the 18th green without shaking either's hand.

The qualifying school is a stressful event, which probably accounts for O'Grady's behaviour and Hanson's exaggerated post-round remark about O'Grady: "I have never seen anything so disgusting in all my life." As no official complaints were registered, no action was taken. It is to be hoped the trio will have a more harmonious round when they play together again today, this time at Sotogrande.

The three-ball at San Roque of John Hawksworth, Michele Reale and Justin Rose represented the past, the present and the future of professional golf in Europe, as well as the

emotions of most of the competitors. Hawksworth was fearful of his chances after a disastrous 81. Reale was pleased with a round of 73 and Rose disappointed with his putting in his 78, ten strokes worse than Carlos Rodiles, a 23-year-old Spaniard who is the leader at San Roque.

Hawksworth, 37, won the Lytham Trophy in 1984 and competed in the Walker Cup in 1985 before turning professional. Thus began an almost annual pilgrimage for him as he attempted to win his card to compete on the European tour. He went to his first school in 1985: this is his twelfth.

Hawksworth knows all about life in the margins. Since 1985, he has won less than £10,000 on average annually in official prize-money. Still, he will not give up and when he hits strokes as well as he struck a long bunker shot with a metal wood on his 18th hole yesterday, he is entitled to his dreams. Malcolm Muggeridge entitled one volume of his autobiography *Tread Softly For You Tread On My Dreams*. Hawksworth could say much the same.

Reale won the Challenge Tour last year. He is a strong player whose experience and skill showed through in his 73, one over par, on a day when a strong wind made certain holes at San Roque difficult. The 8th, for example, required

Leading scores ..... 52

two woods for most players to reach the green and there are not many par-fours where this is the case these days. Chiara Reale, his dark-haired wife, caddied for him and was full of hot-blooded emotion. She lived every stroke with him, her excitement as clear after his good shots as was her disappointment after bad ones.

Reale's emotions were somewhere between those of Hawksworth and Reale. His round might have been worse, but it certainly could have been a lot better. His problem is normally a wildness with his driver, but he hit nine fairways from the tee and found 13 greens in regulation.

On this occasion, his falling was that he three-putted five greens, a source of annoyance to him. "I knew at the beginning of the week that if I could keep double-bogies and three-puns down to a minimum, I would do OK, but I've just thrown in five to start with."

Ken Rose, Justin's father, had a word with his son with a few holes remaining, saying: "If you can be level or ahead of Reale by the end of tomorrow, you'll be doing all right." At that moment, Justin was six strokes behind Reale. He got to within five strokes by the end of the round, but will have to putt much better at Sotogrande today if he is to close the gap any further.



Allen, of the Vardon Health and Leisure team, follows a drive off the 1st tee during the practice round at La Manga

## Amateurs set for ultimate finale

Mel Webb sets the scene for what promises to be two days of gripping action



FORGET, if you will, just for a while, about birdies and eagles and five-irons to three feet and 22 under par and St Andrews and Augusta National and Tiger Woods and Colin Montgomerie. What is about to take place here in the next two days represents the real, living, beating, glorious heart of the game of golf and without it all the rest has no meaning. This is amateur golf: it is where the sport has its soul.

On the South Course at the La Manga Club this morning, the opening blows will be struck in the sixth national final of *The Times MessPiercion Corporate Golf Challenge*. In the still, warm air of this, the spiritual home of this competition, nervous grins will be exchanged, but there will be no humour in them, just the rictus smile of people who know that their resolve is about to be examined as never before.

Nerves will be stretched tighter than the top string of a G major banjo, static electricity will arc and spark there on the 1st tee as the players are exposed to the Cyclopan eye of the Sky Sports television cam-

era. It will not be easy, far from it: but when was the accomplishment of anything truly worthwhile ever easy?

Somewhere in the world, somebody will, today, hit his first stroke in a tournament that will ultimately bring him a substantial amount of currency. That man will be happy, but what he will have achieved will be as nothing compared with what the four winners here will touch and hold tomorrow night, for mere money is ephemeral; there will be other pay days.

For the 56 men playing here, the 36 holes of golf that await them represent the pinnacle of their sporting lives. In competitive terms, it does not get much better than this. The minutest flaws in technique will be laid bare, viscera will be turned to jelly, there will be a constant battle between the temptation to go for the quixotically bold and the aching need to remain calm under fire. The performance-enhancing drug has not been invented that would help the players in this sun-kissed corner of south-east Spain; not even the finest Colombian marching powder would provide the adrenalin rush that will course through the veins of these 56 special people.

The next two days will be the culmination of nine remorseless months of competition that has involved the better part of 100,000 players. The Challenge is, beyond dispute, the biggest corporate golf tournament in the world.

That original entry has now been reduced to 14 teams, the winners of regional finals that were held throughout England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland last month. Tomorrow afternoon, a winner will have been proclaimed, but nobody, not even the team that finishes fourteenth, will have failed. When they have come so far and achieved so much, how can they be said to have failed?

To pick a winner from the field that has assembled here is to invite dismissal as a vainglorious charlatan or an incautious fool: such are the pitfalls of assessing the relative merits of teams who, by their very nature, are subject to the whims of form. Anybody who has ever played the Royal and Ancient game will identify with the fine tolerance that exists in amateur golf between the good, the bad and the downright ugly.

However, if pushed, it is difficult to resist the temptation to cast the vote in the direction of Vardon Health and Leisure. Chris Goda, Steve Davies, Mark Allen and Paul Taylor won this event at La Manga last year and, having won the right to defend their title in a regional final, promptly won again at Chart Hills last month.

The team is underpinned by the two-handicap steadiness of the modest Goda and enhanced by the more volatile but equally potent contributions of his three team-mates. Last year, the mixture was an irresistible one: the local knowledge gained then might, just might, be the one small factor that separates them from the rest by tomorrow night. We shall see.

TEAMS: Interfocus: J Dickens (handicap 5), S Bestin 19, B Norman 18, T Adcock 12, Vardon Health and Fitness: C Goda 2, S Davies 16, M Allen 12, P Taylor 16, Hatch End Fruit: S Aggarwal 14, J Aggarwal 16, A Smith 12, H Walker 16, Benson McGarvey Henderson: P McGarvey 6, P Shelton 12, T Coupe 5, M Caster 8, Wooden Spoon Society: B Chrysal 13, G Langley 21, C Christy 1, G Thompson 8, British Steel Distribution: I Pemberton 20, Kyung Su Han 14, G Filling 10, M Cook 20, Northern Ireland Electricity: M Fitzgerald 16, L Hanna 10, T Sloan 13, E Hutton 12, Extra-vision: R Brown 12, C Cunningham 2, G McAuley 20, P Carroll 16, Ferraris Pieten Services: R French 12, P Craddock 8, R Jones 9, J Weston-Taylor 8, Tetra Laval: R Suggate 9, S Lewis 2, M Probert 16, M Beech 19, Hagar Ultratres: D Hicks 8, T Parker 9, J Mezon 14, T Bygate 10, Aston Clinton Dental Partnership: I Dochazuzon 18, J Keyser 16, G Snyman 7, A von Beckstrom 16, Milton Keynes & North Bucks Chamber of Commerce: N Franklin 5, P Robinson 14, A Thomas 22, I Roberts 6, Willis Corson Corporate: G McInnes 12, A Fairland 18, I Hartley 19, C Watson 4



Rose tees off on the 10th during his disappointing 78 at San Roque. Photograph: Andrew Redington/Allsport

## Confident Westwood plays it by numbers

FROM PATRICIA DAVIES IN MIYAZAKI, JAPAN

LEE WESTWOOD was only No 3 in the European rankings this season, but in his quiet, bombast-free manner, the 25-year-old pointed out that he had won more tournaments than Colin Montgomerie, the perennial No 1, and Darren Clarke, No 2 for the first time.

"I think I've had the best season of us all," he said after the Volvo Masters. "I could make it eight wins by the end of the season."

True enough. In Japan last week, Westwood took his tally to six and today, in the seaside city of Miyazaki on the southern island of Kyushu, he begins his assault on the Dunlop Phoenix tournament, the richest event on the Japanese circuit, with a prize fund of 250 million yen (about £1.2 million). In two weeks' time, he

will be in South Africa for the Million Dollar Challenge, his last outing of a lucrative year.

"There are people who are good at winning," Andrew Chandler, Westwood's manager, said, "and Lee's one of the best." It is also what matters most to Westwood, who, to coin a paraphrase, has diamonds on the spikes of his shoes. He has won \$2.35 million (£1.4 million) in prize-money alone this season and, according to Chandler, makes as much off the course as on.

To win this week, Westwood will need to overcome opposition of the quality of Tom Watson, the defending champion, Clarke, who has recovered from the gout that immobilised him for a week after his Volvo Masters win, José María Olazábal and Ernie Els.

### THE CHALLENGERS AT LA MANGA

1	CENTRAL HOME COUNTIES Interfocus
2	SOUTH-EASTERN HOME COUNTIES Vardon Health & Fitness
3	EASTERN HOME COUNTIES AND ANGELA Hatch End Fruit Ltd
4	NORTH Willis Corson Corporate
5	EAST MIDLANDS Benson McGarvey Henderson
6	SCOTLAND Wooden Spoon Society
7	NORTH WEST British Steel Distribution
8	NORTHERN IRELAND Northern Ireland Electricity
9	REPUBLIC OF IRELAND Extra-vision
10	WEST MIDLANDS Ferraris Pieten Service
11	WALES AND SOUTH WEST Tetra Laval
12	SOUTH Hagar Ultratres
13	WESTERN HOME COUNTIES Aston Clinton Dental Partnership
14	NORTHERN HOME COUNTIES Milton Keynes & North Bucks Chamber of Commerce

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South Africa v West Indies	Wimbledon v Chelsea	England v Australia
Australia v England, second Test	Tottenham v Manchester Utd	England v South Africa
Plus a D.E. Ray Eurocup Cup		

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RUGBY UNION

## Oxford are made to work hard for win

Oxford University ..... 38  
Major R V Stanley's XV ..... 22

BY ROBERT HANDS

THE relevance of this annual fixture has dwindled for the outside world over the years. Gone are the times when established internationals of the day would don the white shirt of Major Stanley's XV and do battle against eager young students. Nowadays, the organisers of this match have to contend with contractual requirements, clashing overseas tours and the lesser standing of the ancient universities in rugby's national structure.

Nevertheless, at Ilfley Road, the motivation is just as strong now as it was for the forebears of the 1998 Oxford University side. With their game against Cambridge at Twickenham less than three weeks away, time is running short for fringe players to make their case. The three players returning from injury did their causes no harm: Kelaher, the captain, was a dynamic force; Challenger, at No 8, was the creative influence in the forwards, while Pawson came on as a replacement in the centre and caught the eye.

Oxford were given a serious workout since the invitation team knitted together quickly — and opened the scoring when Paul Sampson scored a superb individual try. Throughout the 80 minutes (it was injury-time before the Dark Blues pulled away), the two sides kept pace with each other and the aching limbs in the home dressing-room at the end reflected the commitment shown in defence against a bigger, more physical unit.

ford were indebted to the accurate kicking of Booth, but it was Simon Danielli who provided the game's highlight after 79 minutes when he ran forwards, then backwards and sideways, through the middle and round Jorgenson on the outside to score a fabulous try. On a chilly November day, it was a memory to cherish.

SCORES: Oxford University: These Humphries (handicapped) 29, 24, 50, Ashley (29), Booth (23), Danielli (78), Conventione Booth 3, Barry Major Stanley's XV: These Sampson (6), Dewdney (21), Enoch (37), Vogel (48), Conventione Burns.

SCORES RESOURCE: Oxford University first 0-5, 7-5, 7-12, 14-12, 21-12, 21-17 (half time), 21-22, 26-22, 31-22, 38-22. OXFORD UNIVERSITY: R Woodhead (King Edward VII, Lytham and St Edmund Hall), rap K Shuman, Thomas S Woodson (S. Rodvick and Temperon, 20min); \*M Booth (Lytham St Ann's HS) and Worcester; N Ashley (Newington Coll, Sydney and University), J McNeill (King's, Parramatta) and Oriel; rap C Pemasco, Serrano and Worcester; 46), M Humphries (Balgawath HS and St Ann's), rap S Danielli, Chatterham and Inray (21), R Gowers (Oxford Wood Coll and St Edmund Hall), S Barry (Gourdon, Brisbane and St Croix), A Collins (King Edward's, Wob and Lincoln), M Parker (Sudburgh and Christ Church), \*A Reuben (Guthrie and University), \*A Roberts (Ampforth and New College), A Russell (Dun Laoghaire and Macgill), rap T Mitchell, Mark Gillan University and Marlborough), N Collins, G-melo HS, Cape Town and Kelvin), \*P Kelaher (St Joseph's Coll, Sydney and St Cecil), M Challenger (JWS, Hawkesbury and St Anne's).

MAJOR R V STANLEY'S XV: P Jorgenson (Perrett), P Sampson (Wasps) and England), A Currier (London Welsh, rap L Faurer, Worcester), 48), \*J Randall (Glade France), rap H Graham, Reading, 54), S Enoch (Pontypridd), P Burke (Cardiff and Ireland), rap: Currier, 74), D Dewdney (Stratford and Zimabwesi), rap M Owers, Saracens, 41), \*J Bucklett (London Welsh and Wales), rap S Pope, London Welsh, 26), S Mitchell (Wasps), rap P Hoadley, Oxford University, 74), \*R Lusher (Pontypridd and United States), rap: Burdell, 54), G Llewellyn (Wasps) and Wales, rap: J Danielli, Reading C&O, 49), C Vogel (Cardiff and United States), rap: Dewdney, 60), M Gabeys (Enoch), A Dewling (Gloucester), P Scriver (Wasps), rap: L Wilkinson, Worcester (6).

Referee: R Goodfield (Wiltshire).

\* Denotes Blue.

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TENNIS: NOVOTNA LIMPS TO DEFEAT IN CHASE CHAMPIONSHIPS

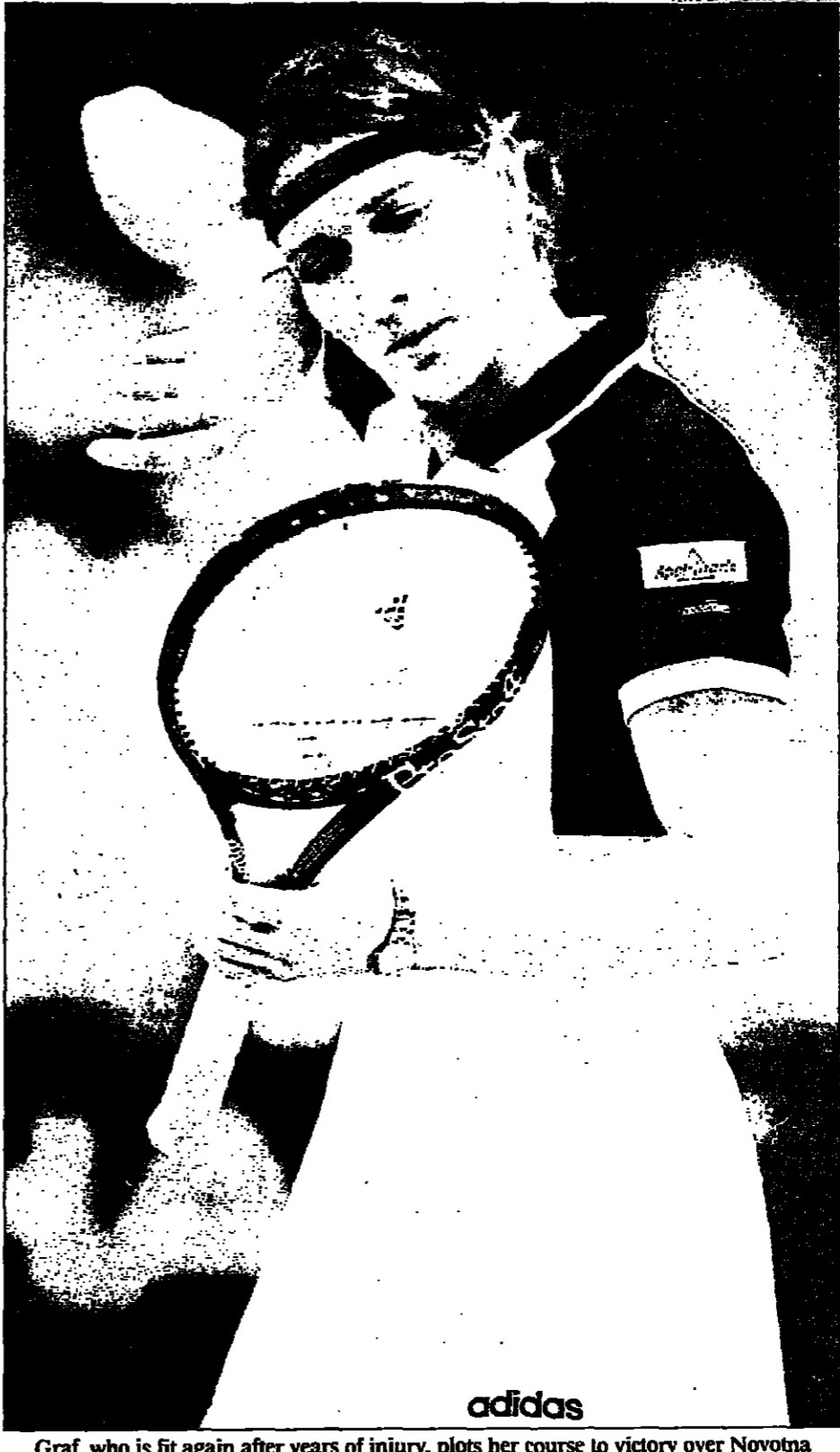
# Resurgent Graf finds fresh inspiration

SPENDING most of the year trotting to and from doctors, surgeons and physiotherapists is not the best way to prepare for a leading tournament, but as the rest of the field shows signs of tiredness, boredom and lethargy, Steffi Graf is finally ready to go. In the past 12 months, she has been able to play only 39 matches — which have brought her three titles — so, after beating Jana Novotna 6-7, 6-4, 6-1 in the Chase Championships here, she is more than happy to do a little overtime this week.

Not that there is any chance of Graf being delayed by the time that the match reached the third set. Novotna, also coming back from an injury break, was beginning to seize up with cramp and, even after the ministrations of the trainer, appeared to be hobbling on two wooden legs by the time that the final points of the match were played. It was a disappointing end to what had been an interesting encounter.

FROM ALIX RAMSAY IN NEW YORK  
and Schnyder has risen through the ranks, the Swiss press have commented that it is nice to see a real Swiss player doing so well. This has upset Hingis rather and it was Schnyder who took the full brunt of her annoyance. At first, Schnyder could do no wrong, pulling Hingis all around the court and generally looking the better player. When she realised what she had done, stage fright set in, but once she had drawn a veil over the second set, she took an early lead in the third. That only angered Hingis, who, looking every inch the stumpy teenager, stamped her foot, beat and pointed to give the Czech press what they wanted — delay or no, it had been that sort of day.

Patty Schnyder almost dampened Martina Hingis's enthusiasm as the two Swiss Misses began their campaigns on Tuesday night. As Hingis, who was born in Slovakia, has fallen from the top of the heap



Graf, who is fit again after years of injury, plots her course to victory over Novotna

## SPORT IN BRIEF

### Leeds coup as Pratt moves on

**RUGBY LEAGUE:** Leeds Rhinos have signed Karl Pratt, 18, the high-scoring Great Britain Academy wing, after agreeing a substantial compensation payment with Featherstone Rovers, for whom Pratt scored 25 tries in 30 appearances in the first division last season. Graham Murray, the Leeds coach, said: "Each time I've seen Karl, I've been impressed by the way he creates excitement with the ball in his hands."

**GOLF:** Nick Faldo will compete in his first World Cup of Golf for seven years at Gulf Harbour in New Zealand, part of a plan to lift his world ranking. Faldo, 41, the world No 66, has made a rare trip to the southern hemisphere in a bid to break into the world's top 64 and thereby qualify for the World Matchplay tournament next February, the first of three new world championships that involve players from all the leading world tours.

**REAL TENNIS:** Steve Virgona easily defeated James Willcocks 3-0 in the second round of the British Lawn Open championship at Queen's Club and now meets Robert Fahey, the world champion, in the quarter-finals.

**RUGBY UNION:** Bedford have signed Joe Beardshaw and Richard Ward on short-term loan from Wasps and Gloucester respectively in an attempt to solve their second-row injury crisis. "We are fortunate to have secured the services of two such promising young players," Geoff Cooke, the club's director of rugby, said.



Richardson: surprise defeat

## Richardson cut down to size

ANDREW RICHARDSON suffered yet another disappointment at the British national championships at Telford yesterday. The Lincolnshire player was beaten 3-6, 6-1, 6-3 in the second round of the singles by Paul Robinson, a fellow left-hander, who has given up full-time tennis to pursue a career in finance. At 6'11", Richardson is one of the tallest players in the game and when he rose to No 133 in the world rankings six months ago, he was expected to follow Tim Henman and Greg Rusedski into the top 100. However, his form then slumped and Richardson became so frustrated that he gave up tennis for three months after Wimbledon.

"I was not planning on coming back," he said, "but I went over to the US Open for a week and while I was there Tim [Henman] suggested I play doubles with him in back some motivation, but I'm only slowly coming back into it." Richardson won the opening set yesterday, but his rival, who will be 25 on Sunday, came storming back to gain a comfortable victory. It was not quite such a shock as it appeared as Robinson reached the last four here two years ago, when he beat Richardson early in the tournament and then took a set off Rusedski in the semi-final. Robinson, who lives in Sweden, said: "I return well and it cancels out his big serve a little bit. He is used to winning a lot of points with his first serve and I think I frustrated him today." Lydia Perkins produced the biggest shock in the women's singles when she beat Karen Cross, the No 5 seed from Devon, 4-6, 6-1, 7-5 to move into the last eight.

## GUIDE TO 1999 INTERNATIONAL AND COUNTY CRICKET FIXTURES

# Innovations mark new season

THE World Cup in May and June next year offers the England and Wales Cricket Board the chance to market the game that it has craved since its inception in January 1997. Yet the restructuring of county cricket also bears the stamp of the marketing department. The first-class season will have its earliest start and although the county championship remains untouched, there are notable innovations in the one-day game. There is a two-division, 45-overs-a-side national league to replace the Axa League, the 50-over Super Cup for the top eight teams in the championship last year and an expanded NatWest Trophy, involving 60 teams and played over 50 rather than 60 overs. For the first time since 1972, the Benson and Hedges Cup will not feature. While the majority of national league fixtures will be played on Sundays, there are ten scheduled for Saturdays, a day that has seen very precious little county cricket over the years because of the proliferation of Wednesday starts in the championship. One quarter-final and semi-final of the Super Cup will be played on a Saturday, as will one of the NatWest Trophy semi-finals, the other being played the next day. The Nat-

West Trophy final is on a Sunday for the first time and has been brought forward to the end of August to counter problems caused by the 10.30am start in September. The expansion of the NatWest Trophy means that the first two rounds involve only the minor counties, Hants, Dorset and Devon, competing for the first time — and the recently formed recreational teams from the first-class counties, which include club players and young contracted professionals. The staging of warm-up matches between counties and nations competing in the World Cup means that the county season takes a five-day break in May.

By JOHN STERN  
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APRIL  
THU 8-UNIVERSITY MATCHES (two days)  
Durham: Durham University v Lancaster  
The Parks: Oxford University v Worcester  
MON 12-UNIVERSITY MATCH (three days)  
Trent Bridge: Nottinghamshire v Cambridge

THU 14-COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP  
Stoke: Durham v Kent  
Cardiff: Glamorgan v Gloucestershire  
Southampton: Hampshire v Worcestershire  
Old Trafford: Lancashire v Northamptonshire  
Old Trafford: Lancashire v Northamptonshire  
Old Trafford: Lancashire v Northamptonshire  
SUN 16-UNIVERSITY MATCH (one day)  
Fenner's: Cambridge University v Oxford University

THU 18-NATIONAL LEAGUE  
Premier division  
Canterbury: Kent v Lancashire

THU 20-UNIVERSITY MATCH (three days)  
Fenner's: Cambridge University v Somerset

THU 22-CORNHILL SECOND TEST MATCH  
Leeds: England v New Zealand  
COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP  
Warwickshire v Gloucestershire

THU 24-UNIVERSITY MATCH (three days)  
Fenner's: Cambridge University v Somerset

THU 26-UNIVERSITY MATCH (three days)  
Fenner's: Cambridge University v Somerset

MAY  
FRI 7-WORLD CUP WARM-UP MATCHES  
Canterbury: Kent v Essex  
Leicester: Leicestershire v Warwickshire  
Northampton: Northamptonshire v Somerset  
Hove: Sussex v Surrey

THU 28-UNIVERSITY MATCH (three days)  
Fenner's: Cambridge University v Somerset

THU 30-UNIVERSITY MATCH (three days)  
Fenner's: Cambridge University v Somerset

THU 31-UNIVERSITY MATCH (three days)  
Fenner's: Cambridge University v Somerset

THU 1-UNIVERSITY MATCH (three days)  
Fenner's: Cambridge University v Somerset

THU 2-UNIVERSITY MATCH (three days)  
Fenner's: Cambridge University v Somerset

THU 3-UNIVERSITY MATCH (three days)  
Fenner's: Cambridge University v Somerset

JUNE  
WED 2-COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP  
Derby: Derbyshire v Yorkshire  
Cardiff: Glamorgan v Gloucestershire  
Southampton: Hampshire v Worcestershire  
Edgbaston: Warwickshire v Essex  
Headingley: Yorkshire v Lancashire

WED 4-COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP  
Derby: Derbyshire v Yorkshire  
Cardiff: Glamorgan v Gloucestershire  
Southampton: Hampshire v Worcestershire  
Edgbaston: Warwickshire v Essex  
Headingley: Yorkshire v Lancashire

WED 6-COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP  
Derby: Derbyshire v Yorkshire  
Cardiff: Glamorgan v Gloucestershire  
Southampton: Hampshire v Worcestershire  
Edgbaston: Warwickshire v Essex  
Headingley: Yorkshire v Lancashire

WED 8-COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP  
Derby: Derbyshire v Yorkshire  
Cardiff: Glamorgan v Gloucestershire  
Southampton: Hampshire v Worcestershire  
Edgbaston: Warwickshire v Essex  
Headingley: Yorkshire v Lancashire

WED 10-COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP  
Derby: Derbyshire v Yorkshire  
Cardiff: Glamorgan v Gloucestershire  
Southampton: Hampshire v Worcestershire  
Edgbaston: Warwickshire v Essex  
Headingley: Yorkshire v Lancashire

WED 12-COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP  
Derby: Derbyshire v Yorkshire  
Cardiff: Glamorgan v Gloucestershire  
Southampton: Hampshire v Worcestershire  
Edgbaston: Warwickshire v Essex  
Headingley: Yorkshire v Lancashire

WED 14-COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP  
Derby: Derbyshire v Yorkshire  
Cardiff: Glamorgan v Gloucestershire  
Southampton: Hampshire v Worcestershire  
Edgbaston: Warwickshire v Essex  
Headingley: Yorkshire v Lancashire

JULY  
WED 15-UNIVERSITY MATCH (three days)  
Fenner's: Cambridge University v Somerset

WED 17-UNIVERSITY MATCH (three days)  
Fenner's: Cambridge University v Somerset

WED 19-UNIVERSITY MATCH (three days)  
Fenner's: Cambridge University v Somerset

WED 21-UNIVERSITY MATCH (three days)  
Fenner's: Cambridge University v Somerset

WED 23-UNIVERSITY MATCH (three days)  
Fenner's: Cambridge University v Somerset

WED 25-UNIVERSITY MATCH (three days)  
Fenner's: Cambridge University v Somerset

WED 27-UNIVERSITY MATCH (three days)  
Fenner's: Cambridge University v Somerset

AUGUST  
WED 28-UNIVERSITY MATCH (three days)  
Fenner's: Cambridge University v Somerset

WED 30-UNIVERSITY MATCH (three days)  
Fenner's: Cambridge University v Somerset

WED 31-UNIVERSITY MATCH (three days)  
Fenner's: Cambridge University v Somerset

WED 1-UNIVERSITY MATCH (three days)  
Fenner's: Cambridge University v Somerset

WED 3-UNIVERSITY MATCH (three days)  
Fenner's: Cambridge University v Somerset

WED 5-UNIVERSITY MATCH (three days)  
Fenner's: Cambridge University v Somerset

WED 7-UNIVERSITY MATCH (three days)  
Fenner's: Cambridge University v Somerset

## Football

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Denise Roodt, manager of the South African women's national team, is seen here with her players.

SEPTEMBER  
WED 1-COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP  
Derby: Derbyshire v Yorkshire  
Cardiff: Glamorgan v Gloucestershire  
Southampton: Hampshire v Worcestershire  
Edgbaston: Warwickshire v Essex  
Headingley: Yorkshire v Lancashire

WED 3-COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP  
Derby: Derbyshire v Yorkshire  
Cardiff: Glamorgan v Gloucestershire  
Southampton: Hampshire v Worcestershire  
Edgbaston: Warwickshire v Essex  
Headingley: Yorkshire v Lancashire

WED 5-COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP  
Derby: Derbyshire v Yorkshire  
Cardiff: Glamorgan v Gloucestershire  
Southampton: Hampshire v Worcestershire  
Edgbaston: Warwickshire v Essex  
Headingley: Yorkshire v Lancashire

WED 7-COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP  
Derby: Derbyshire v Yorkshire  
Cardiff: Glamorgan v Gloucestershire  
Southampton: Hampshire v Worcestershire  
Edgbaston: Warwickshire v Essex  
Headingley: Yorkshire v Lancashire

WED 9-COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP  
Derby: Derbyshire v Yorkshire  
Cardiff: Glamorgan v Gloucestershire  
Southampton: Hampshire v Worcestershire  
Edgbaston: Warwickshire v Essex  
Headingley: Yorkshire v Lancashire

WED 11-COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP  
Derby: Derbyshire v Yorkshire  
Cardiff: Glamorgan v Gloucestershire  
Southampton: Hampshire v Worcestershire  
Edgbaston: Warwickshire v Essex  
Headingley: Yorkshire v Lancashire

WED 13-COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP  
Derby: Derbyshire v Yorkshire  
Cardiff: Glamorgan v Gloucestershire  
Southampton: Hampshire v Worcestershire  
Edgbaston: Warwickshire v Essex  
Headingley: Yorkshire v Lancashire













SKIING 48

It's all downhill for Carrick-Anderson before World Cup

SPORT

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 19 1998

GOLF 50

Amateurs line up for grand final of Corporate Challenge



Wainwright among trio omitted for match against South Africa
Telfer wields Scotland axe

By MARK SOUSTER

THE contrast in fortunes of two flank forwards, one South African, the other Scottish, could not have been more marked yesterday.

Wainwright is not alone. Rowen Shepherd and Tony Stanger have also been culled from the side that lost to the New Zealand Maoris on Saturday.

Jim Telfer, the Scotland coach, who names his side tomorrow, made reassuring noises about the trio, saying that the door remained open.

Skinstad's irresistible form, both at home and on this tour, forced Nick Mallett, the South Africa coach, into what he admitted had been his most difficult selectorial decision so far.

Neither Skinstad nor Stewart, both of Western Province, realistically felt that they could break into the international XV. They have Wales to thank for having done so.



Alan Tait displays a determined approach during the Scotland training session at Murrayfield yesterday. Photograph: David Rogers/Aisport

derful career ahead of him. He has won six caps as a replacement. "He is the form loose forward," Mallett said.

Would that Telfer enjoyed such luxuries. He justified the decision to drop Wainwright by saying that Scotland had lost Matthew Proudfoot and Gordon Simpson, two of their heaviest forwards.

Scotland against France last year in the Five Nations Championship, has been in rumbustious form for Newcastle, having filled the void left by Pat Lam.

squad originally selected for the Maori game would also see service against the Springboks. "I thought my Test career was finished," Walton said.

Leslie also expressed surprise at his rapid elevation only a fortnight after arriving in Scotland. Leslie, who qualifies through a paternal grandfather from Linlithgow, is expected to win his first cap, with Martyn, his younger brother, on the bench.

MURRAYFIELD TEAMS

SCOTLAND: Baelis, G Armstrong (Newcastle Falcons), D Hodge (Edinburgh Ravens), D Line (London Scottish), J Leslie (Glasgow Caltonians), K Logan (Worcester), J Mayer (Edinburgh Ravens), C Murray (Edinburgh Ravens), B Redpath (Edinburgh Ravens), A Tait (Edinburgh Ravens), G Townsend (Glasgow Caltonians), G Townsend (Glasgow Caltonians), P Burnett (London Scottish), S Gilman (Glasgow Caltonians), D Hogg (Edinburgh Ravens), S Murray (Edinburgh Ravens), E Palmer (Edinburgh Ravens), S Pountney (Northampton), T Smith (Glasgow Caltonians), P Walton (Newcastle Falcons), G Weir (Newcastle Falcons).

SOUTH AFRICA: P Montgomery (Western Province), S Terrence (Boland), A Bryman (Blue Bulls), C Stewart (Western Province), P Rossouw (Western Province), H Honebein (Natal Sharks), J van der Westhuizen (Blue Bulls), R Kempson (Natal Sharks), J Dallas (Golden Lions), A Garvey (Natal Sharks), K Oos (Blue Bulls), M Andrews (Natal Sharks), J Erasmus (Free State), R Stubbart (WP), G Tschirren (Natal Sharks, captain), Rpienewitz G du Toit (Griquoland West), F Smith (Blue Bulls), W Swarup (Free State), C Ridge (Western Province), A Vermaak (Free State), O La Rue (Natal Sharks), N Drottske (Free State).

O'Sullivan is forced out by depression

By PHIL YATES

SNOOKERS finest natural talent, Ronnie O'Sullivan, who has been in the depths of depression over his form and the game in general for some time, will not defend his Liverpool Victoria United Kingdom championship title in Bournemouth.

O'Sullivan, 22, withdrew yesterday from the event suffering from "physical and mental exhaustion". Ian Doyle, his manager, said: "Ronnie's doctor has ordered a complete rest from snooker."

"Ronnie is desperately disappointed that he won't be able to play, but, at the moment, his health must come first. In my opinion, he will be out until February." If Doyle's assessment is correct, O'Sullivan will also miss the German Masters, Irish Open, Nations' Cup, Regal Welsh Open and possibly the Benson and Hedges Masters.

John Read, from Wolverhampton, the world No 70, who received a walkover into the second round because of O'Sullivan's absence, publicly echoed the sentiments of many other players. "I wouldn't wish that on anyone. I really hope he gets better soon," Read said.

Regularly downbeat press conferences, even those conducted immediately after he has lifted a trophy, have increasingly pointed to O'Sullivan's unhappiness. Even victory in the Regal Scottish Masters, the first leading event of the season six weeks ago, failed to lift his personal gloom.

Over the course of the past year or so, O'Sullivan has repeatedly threatened to retire. He has insisted he is "only in snooker for the money" and that "I wouldn't mind if I never picked up a cue again". During the recent Grand Prix, O'Sullivan was adamant that he "hated the game" and was unperturbed by defeat. This mental malaise has previously been mistaken for petulance.

Ironically, the matter has come to a head at the United Kingdom championship, a gathering that thrust O'Sullivan to national prominence in 1993, when, still a week short of his 18th birthday, he became the youngest player to triumph in a world-ranking tournament.

During a pre-championship media day only nine days ago, with representatives of the

sponsor present, O'Sullivan predicted that he would probably lose his opening match 9-0 or 9-1.

Parallels will inevitably be drawn between O'Sullivan's problems and those encountered by other sportsmen and women pushed into the spotlight at a tender age.

The diagnosis fits, but, in this case, it is simplistic. O'Sullivan's mental welfare has undoubtedly been affected by the life sentence imposed on his father, Ronnie Sr, for murder in 1992, only a couple of months after he turned professional.

At the 1996 world championship, O'Sullivan was fined £20,000 for physically assaulting an official; in June, he was forced to forfeit the £61,300



O'Sullivan: exhaustion

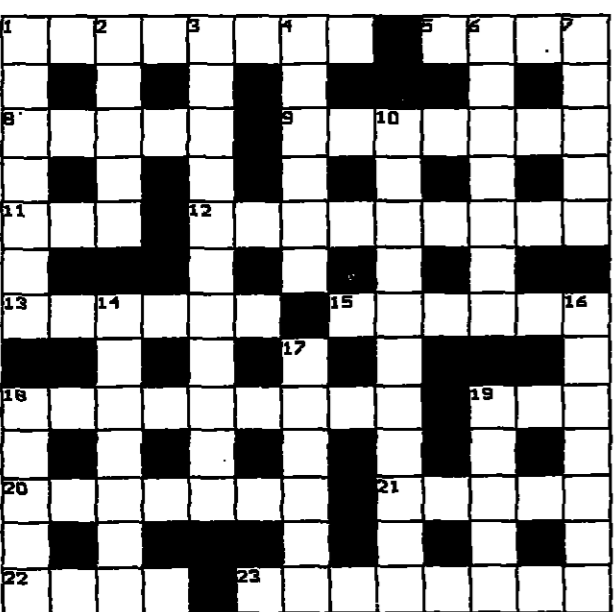
first prize from the Benson and Hedges Irish Masters after traces of marijuana were discovered in a urine test taken at the event.

Doyle, who said that O'Sullivan's condition was unrelated to alcohol or drugs, said: "This has been building up in Ronnie for a while and it's systematic of the situation he's had to face up to over the past six years."

Few would argue that O'Sullivan possesses the skill to become world champion, but whether he has the necessary temperament must now be seriously questioned.

As one of snooker's most popular figures and entertaining stylists, O'Sullivan will be sorely missed from the UK championship. Seven members of the top 16 have already fallen at the first hurdle, including such notable players as Alan McManus, Peter Ebdon, James Wattana and Tony Drago.

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 1567

- ACROSS: 1 Tolerating (8), 5 Mound (4), 8 Castle mound (5), 9 Onegin, Godunov poet (7), 11 Chance: large amount (3), 12 An indigenous person (9), 13 Given name, new sound-track (6), 15 One having to live abroad (6), 18 One taking the blame (9), 19 Hostility (5), 20 (Look) sideways, disapprovingly (7), 21 Driver's breathing pack (5), 22 Speed as opposed to beam (4), 23 Good-looking (8).

- SOLUTION TO NO 1566: ACROSS: 1 Cavil 7 Ethical 8 Parquet 9 Overcast, 11 Drench 13 Hankering 15 John Wayne 19 Guffaw, 21 Forbids 23 Isotope 24 Handbag 25 Yodel. DOWN: 1 Cypid 2 Vortex 3 Launch 4 Veto 5 Mirror, 6 Balcony 10 Viking 12 Hazard 14 Potomac 16 Nobody, 17 Eulogy 18 Afford 20 Wheel 22 Sign.

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United directors prepare for supporters' verbal assault

By STEPHEN WOOD

IF IT was designed as a test of their public relations skills, Manchester United plc would have failed miserably long ago. The imminent takeover of United, by BSkyB, has angered a section of the club's support, an awkward situation that has been made worse because of their marginalisation in the deal's process. The supporters may not be able to avert the inevitable, but, today, they have a long-awaited chance to show their feelings to the directors.

Hundreds of shareholders are expected at the Manchester Suite of United's Old Trafford stadium, with an avid interest in the club's annual meeting (AGM). The subject of the takeover will be on the official agenda, but it is likely that every director of the plc board will be fully briefed in anticipation of a stormy meeting.

Many of supporters are opposed to the £623 million takeover and the number of complaints received by the Office of Fair Trading led to the buy-out being referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. The deal is still expected to go through, but the AGM represents the first time that fans can meet directors face-to-face since the board recommended acceptance of the bid.

Andy Walsh, the chairman of the Independent Manchester United Supporters' Association (IMUSA), said: "The dis-

dain with which the board have treated the fans and other shareholders has been staggering. No one has explained why the takeover will be good for United, no one has explained what BSkyB can do for the club that it can't do for itself. We want answers to these questions and more."

The meeting will be chaired by Sir Roland Smith, the chairman of the plc, but Martin Edwards, the chairman of the football club, will not be required to speak. Edwards, though, may not escape the wrath of the fans. Walsh said: "Martin Edwards has said he is willing to

make it clear to us why this deal should go ahead, but we have invited him to two public debates and he turned down both. We want to know why we can't have a proper discussion about the future of the club."

Edwards usually holds one-on-one sessions with the shareholders at the end of formal business and he is expected to repeat the line of response that he has already proffered when the question of the takeover is raised. Recently, he said: "I think there has been a misconception about this deal. It has become a personal issue, but I would like to remind people that it was not my decision in isolation."

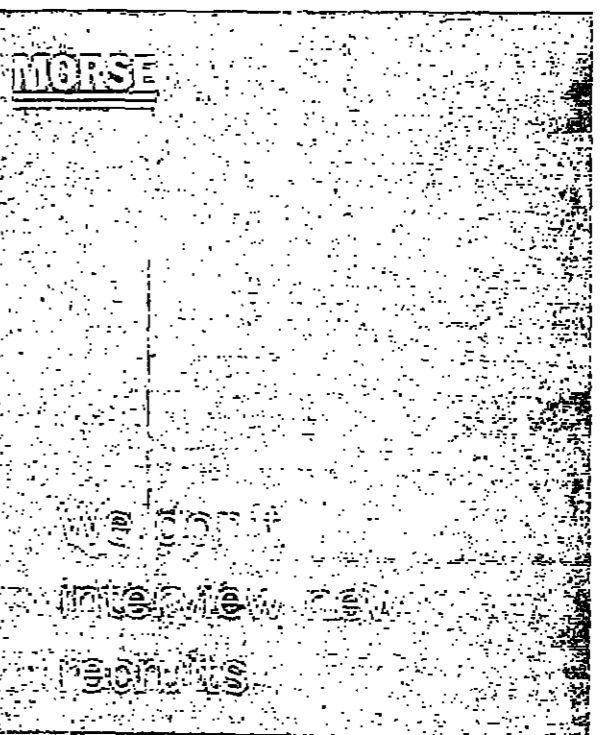
There were more problems of communication at United yesterday. Andy Cole, having criticised Glenn Hoddle, the England coach, for the way in which Hoddle left him out of the friendly against the Czech Republic last night, attracted rumours that he would never be called up again while Hoddle is in charge of the national team.

Cole, the striker, was unhappy that Hoddle did not consult him personally about the issue and Paul Stretford, the player's business manager, said: "If Hoddle would call Andy and talk to him man-to-man, Andy would be happy to take that call."

"At the moment, Andy has decided to stand up for himself because this is not the first time Hoddle has made disparaging remarks about him. He has made it clear that Andy will not be ready for international football for up to 18 months, so it looks like Glenn has made his mind up about Andy. Our decision to make our feelings known, therefore, may not influence anything."



Cole is still on the goal trail despite Hoddle's misgivings

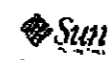


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